

Spira Subscribes to his Recantation.



*Spira by Slavish Fear doth Truth deny,
And sets his trembling Hand to Popery*

A
RELATION

Of the Fearful Estate of

Francis Spira,

After he turn'd *Apostate* from
the *Protestant Church* to *Popery*.

As also the Miserable LIVES,
and Woeful DEATHS, of

Mr. JOHN CHILD,

Who desperately hang'd himself in *Brick-*
Lane, in Spittle-Fields, London, 1684.

AND,

Mr. GEO. EDWARDS,

Late of *Stratford in Essex*, who wilfully
Shot himself to Death, Jan. 4. 1704.

To which is added,

King *James the First's* Prophetical Curse
upon any of his Race, that should
Apostatise to the *Church of Rome*. With
several Examples of God's Judgments on
other Apostates.

With *Origen's* Lamentation.

L O N D O N:

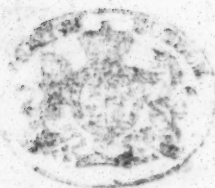
Printed for *J. Clarke*, at the *Golden-Ball* in
Duck-Lane, 1734.

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TO THE
READER.

THE Certainty, the Remark-
ableness, and the great Use
of this Relation of *Spira*, has long
since made it Acceptable to the
Sober part of the World, so that
it hath been Translated and Pub-
lish'd in most of the Languages
of *Europe*; and particularly great
Numbers of them have been vend-
ed in *England*; but being now out of
Print, and I having purchas'd the
Right of the Copy, thought it very
fit to reprint it: For certainly ne-
ver was there more need to pre-
serve the *Memory* of such awak-
ning Examples, than in this present
Age, wherein an *apostatizing Spirit*
seems to be let loose, and not a few

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ready to shift their religion (as seamen
do their Sails) with every Wind.

Let such falling Stars, whilst they
view in this Looking-Glass, *Spira's*
dreadful Condition, read the Con-
sequences of their own Apostacy.
God will not be mocked: There's
no Dissembling with Heaven, no
Masquerading with the All-seeing
Eye of divine Vengeance, which
sooner or later will overtake them.

To make this little Treatise more
Serviceable, I have procur'd divers
notable Presidents of God's Judg-
ments, visibly inflicted on the like
Sinners, to be added to it from se-
veral approved Authors.

Apostacy is a Sin most odious to
God and Man. *The Angels* (saith
the Apostle) *which kept not their
first Estate, but left their own Ha-
bitation, be hath reserved in ever-
lasting Chains under Darknes, unto
the Judgment of the Great Day.*

Hence it is, that the Zeal of our
Protestant

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Protestant Ancestors, thought fit by an *Act of State*, to Brand this horrid Sin with the most heinous Guilt and grievous Punishment, making it no less than *High-Treason for any Subject of this Kingdom, (of whatever Estate or Degree) that has been Educated in the true Reformed Religion of the Church of England, by Law established, to be willingly reconciled to the Church of Rome;* as appears by the Statute 9 Jac. c. 4. S. 23. A Law to this Day in force, and well worthy the Regard of all those whom it may concern. Nor was the Zeal and Resolution, of that wise and learned Prince, King James the 1st, less to be applauded, of which we have a signal instance recorded by a reverend Judge to Posterity. viz. *That in the Second Year after K. James's coming into England, there being a Rumour spread, as if he intended, or was inclinable to give the Papists Tolle-*

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ration, his Majesty was offended thereat; esteeming it a very great Scandal on a Protestant Prince; and having assembled divers of the Nobles, he there publickly declared, that he never had such a Thought, and that he would venture the best Blood in his Body for the Protestant Religion; solemnly adding a Curse upon any of his Race, that should Apostatize to Rome, saying, If any of my Posterity shall embrace any other than that true Religion which I now profess, I pray God to take them out of the World. See Crook's Reports, 2 Jacobi.

It was in the beginning of the Year, 1683, that I new Publish'd the Relation of the fearful Estate of Francis Spira, with the fore-going Epistle, to prevent, as much, as in me lay, that Torrent of Apostacy, that then was flowing in upon the Nation, like a mighty Deluge, ready to overflow and bear down all before

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before it: And it was then as much as I durst say and more than they would allow afterwards. For Dr. *Sharp* (late A. Bp. of *York*) having in one of his Sermons, made mention of that Curse of K. *James* the First, which I have here before recited; K. *James* the II, being conscious to himself of being an *Apostate* from the Religion in which he was brought up, and which was profess'd by his Father and Grand-Father, found himself so nearly touch'd, that he sent a *Mandate* to the Bp. of *London* to Suspend the said Dr. *Sharp* from Preaching; which the Bishop seeing no Reason for; insonmuch as the Dr. had transgress'd no Law, as being what by Law he could not. Upon which, that King who was for advancing his *Dispensing Power* above all Law, was so enrag'd, that he created an *Extra-Judicial Ecclesiastical Court*, to Suspend the Reverend Bishop.

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which they also did, as he commanded.

This mighty Indignation of K. *James* the 2d, against repeating this Curse of his Grand-Father, gave me an occasion of considering it a little more sedately ; and by comparing it with what has since befallen his two unhappy Grand-Children, not to mention his own Son, K. *Charles* I, who tho' himself a Protestant, yet was so *Uxorious* an Husband to his Queen, that he granted the *Papists* more Liberty on her account, than was either consistent with the Laws of the Land, or the Welfare of the Protestant Religion, which was so undermin'd in *England* in his Reign, that at last, things broke out into a bloody War, the end of which was fatal to the Nation, and surprizingly Tragical to that unfortunate King, which encourag'd the Rebls in *Ireland* to Massacre Two Hundred Thousand Innocent Protestants in cold

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cold Blood; for which a Commission was pretended by them under that King's *Broad-Seal*; but whether it were so or not, must be left to that Day in which all Secrets will be made manifest. I say not to mention the great Lenity of King *Charles I.*, to the *Papists*, it is notorious enough, that the Grand-Father's Curie took hold of both the Grand-Children, *Charles* and *James II.*, for their *Apostatizing* from God's true Religion unto *Popery*. King *Charles II.*, did indeed *Dissemble* in it, in his Life-time; for being an *effeminate* Prince, and entirely given up to his Pleasures, he was not very solicitous about any Religion at all; and provided he could but enjoy those Pleasures to which he had devoted himself, he was not thoughtful what became of Religion; but if we may judge of his Life by his Death (when Men least of all *dissemble*) that little Religion which
he

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he had was *Popery*. 'Twas *that*, that he loved best, though he wanted either *Courage*, or *Zeal*, or both, to Hazard his *Kingdom* by setting it up, as his Brother *James* afterwards did. And therefore the *Papists* (not to say his *Brother*) took care to send him out of the *World*, for *One* that should do their *Business* better, to be set up in his room: And thereby his *Grand-Father's* *Commination* was made good upon him, *That for embracing another Religion, he was taken out of the World*. And tho some are willing to believe he dy'd a *Protestant*, because he went under that *Denomination*, yet his receiving the *Sacrament* on his *Death-Bed* from Father *Huddleston*, a *Papish Priest*, after the manner of the Church of *Rome*, is too great a *Demonstration* of his being one of that *Communion*.

And thus by the just *Judgment* of the Almighty, whose *Ways* are *in-scrutable*;

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scrutable, and his Judgments past finding out, he fell (according to his Grand-Father's Prayer) for embracing the *Romish Religion*, by their Hands (as there is great Reason to believe) whose Religion he fell away to, because they thought him too remiss in his Zeal for it; tho' indeed he did them more Service by those under-hand Methods he took to promote it, than his brother could do by his more publick espousing of it.

King *Charles II.* being gone, and King *James* come to the Crown, he openly profess'd his *Apostacy*, in embracing another *Religion*, than that *true One* his Grand-Father profess'd; and drew upon him all the Plagues that an *abdicated Prince* could lye under: Which two Examples are fresh Instances, how dangerous it is, for any Person, tho' of the highest Rank, to *Apostatize* from the good Ways of God, and
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to embrace that *Religion* with which God has a Controversy, and which in his due time he will utterly overturn. And tho' by the coming in of the late Glorious King *William*, *Papery* has receiv'd such a Blow, that one would think there should be no Danger of *apostatizing* to it any more; yet the *Devil*, and his *Instruments the Jesuits*, are busy and industrious as ever to promote it, tho' under several Disguises: And whilst they are bringing up a *Pretender* on t'other side the Water, they seem to be Confident of turning the Point some time or other; and therefore it concerns us all to stand upon our Guard, and take heed of the very *Beginnings* of *Apostacy*; which, I fear, is creeping upon too many, by insensible Degrees: For to grow cold and careless in the Profession of *Religion*, is one Degree of *Apostacy*, and may, and will (without divine Grace intercept)

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interpose) lead a Man into all the rest.

Before I conclude this Epistle, I think fit to acquaint the *Reader*, that this *true Relation* of the fearful Estate of *Francis Spira*, has found such good Acceptance, that it has occasion'd a surreptitious Relation to be shamefully publish'd to the World, even under the Name of a *Second Spira*; which as it is without any Foundation of Truth, so it is a great Abuse to the World, and an imposing upon the Credulity of unwary Readers: and whatever the Design may have been, is but making the *Truth* of God beholden to a *Lye*, which is expressly condemn'd by the Apostle; *Rom. 3. 7, 8.* But among the many Examples recited in this Book, there are none but what are of approved Verity, and well Attested: Yea, so far am I from imposing on the Reader by fictitious Relations, that I would
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to God there were not so many real Instances of this kind, and that Apostacy had not left such visible Marks behind it in the wicked Lives, and despairing Deaths of so many miserable Souls as it has done.

I have also farther to inform the Reader, that I have in this Edition added another very true and tremendous Example, of God's Justice upon a Person, for sinning against Light and Knowledge, which I think, is as remarkable as any thing that has happen'd of this Nature, for these Hundred Years; and this is no Example brought from Foreign Parts, but a Thing transacted at our own Doors. The Person who was the sad Subject hereof, was particularly known to my self, and very many others, at this time living in *London*; the place of his last Habitation being no farther off than *Spittle-Fields*.
He

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He was a Man, of a strong and able Body, bold and confident, of great Presence of Mind, but *a wounded Conscience who can bear?* For thou wilt find in the Relation, that when God came to contend with him, he was so distracted with Terrors, that he was reduc'd to a meer Skeleton, and made the lively Image of Despair. But I will not anticipate in this Preface what you shall meet with in the Book, but refer you to the Relation it self.

I shall only add my Wishes and Prayers, that past *Examples* may prove future *Warnings*; and all that read these signal Instances of God's Judgments, may thereby come to see the Danger of *Apostacy*, and hold fast the Truth, and not *depart into the Wars of Baal-Peor*, or *lick up the Vomits of Apostod*; but conserve the pure Faith, and walk answerable thereunto in
their

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their *Conversation*, which will
bring a Blessing in Life, and Com-
fort in Death, and Glory to Eter-
nity.

Thine,

B. H.



The



The Preface.

FOR the Truth of this History ensuing, besides, Circumstances of Place, Person, Time, and Occasion, so exactly observ'd, I refer my self to the Relation of those godly Men, who in several Languages have manifested to the World, the several Passages thereof: And altho' I am not ignorant, that at first they were not only Credited, but discredited and slander'd by such as found them to be a Blur to the *Roman* Profession, yet they lost not their Lustre thereby; but being acquitted by many Compurgators of several Nations, and some of the *Romish* Religion, being all of them Spectators of this Tragedy, it occasion'd not only a farther Manifestation and Confirmation of the Truth, but also a large and more frequent Confluence,

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ence, to see that which they had formerly only heard of. This partly appeareth out of the succeeding Story; but more fully out of an Apology written by *Vergerius*, Bishop of *Justinople*, who was accused for dispersing the Fame of his Example to the Stain of *Popery*, in which Apology to *N. Rottan*, Suffragan of *Padua*, is shortly and clearly declared what was said, what was done, and who were present. If that it be demanded, what moved me to compile this Treatise of *Spira*, tell them, that it should teach *Fear* and *Reverence*; and indeed, among all those that came to see him, few or none return'd unshaken. *Vergerius*, in his first Epistle saith, *I would fain go and see him again, but I exceedingly Fear and Tremble.* And in his Apology saith, *It is such a rare Example, as I would willingly go to the farthest Parts of the World, to see or hear the like.*
The

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The Lady *Jane* to her Father's Chaplain, (that had fallen into *Spira's* Sin) saith, *Remember the lamentable Estate of Spira!*

I acknowledge, that there hath been formerly a Book publish'd in *English* on this Subject; but as far as I can learn (for I could not get one of them) it was not so various and large as this Treatise; and, as I have heard, a Translation of only one of the Tractates, whence in part I gather'd the ensuing Discourse. Concerning my Care and Fidelity herein, I may truly say, without changing Colour, that not one Sentence of all this Work, attributed to the Person of *Spira*, but it hath its Warrant either from the Epistles of *Vergerius*, and *Gribaldus*, Professors of Law at *Padua*; or from the Discourses of *Henry Scriver*, a Scotsman, *Sigism. Gellons*, a Transilvanian, and *Martin Bocha*, a Divine of *Bazil*. I have taken

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taken no Liberty, than as a Relator, to weave the aforesaid Discourses together, so as those who under several, were accounted several, I here make one entire History, connected by due Succession of *Time* and *Occasion*, as punctually as could be aim'd at, by the *Circumstances* noted in the Writings of those Holy and Learned Men before-named.

Extraordinary Examples of Divine Justice, God never intended for a *Nine Days Wonder*; else would he when he ememplify'd *Lot's Wife*, have turn'd her into a Statue of melting Snow, not of lasting Salt; which stood as *Josephus* tells us, 'till his Age, after the Destruction of *Jerusalem*; and as some Travellers report still at this Day; *Ut quoddam hominibus præstaret condimentum quo sapient unde illud caveatur Exemplum, Aug. de Civit. Dei, lib. 16. cap. 30.*

For

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For a Season against Corruption,
a Preservation against Apostacy.

This Tragedy when New, was
the Conversion and Confirmation
of sundry Worthies; *Vergerius*, a
daily Spectator thereof, forsaking
a rich Bishoprick of *Justinopolis*,
and Tents of *Antichrist*, went to
Basil, and died a worthy Pro-
testant. Many Nations had Eye-
Witnesses of their own Students
then in the University of *Padua*,
who penned the Story, the Copies
whereof are frequently reviv'd:
Our *Englisk* ones were very De-
fective, and now worn out of Shops
and Hands; sundry Manuscripts of
this abroad *imperfect*; which mov'd
me to compare this Labour of a
worthy Gentleman (who *Faithfully*
Translated it out of *Italian, French*,
and *Dutch* Letters) with the *Latin*
of *Cælius-Secundus, Curio, Mat-*
thæus Gribauldus, Professors of the
Civil Law in *Padua*, *Sigismund*
Gelons,

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Gelons, a Transilvanian and Henricus Scotus, all daily Visitors of Spira, and find it accord with them.

Touching *Spira's* Person, I find most learned Writers do encline to the right and hopeful Hand; moved by his sweet, humble, and charitable Speeches (some few desperate ones excepted) that fell from him in some little Agonies, which kept him Fasting and Watching about six Months space, eating nothing but what was forc'd down his Throat.

The Sum of *Calvin's* and *Borbon's* Counsel is, (who write largely of the Use of this Pattern) *That all learn to take heed of Back-sliding, which God's Soul abhors; and not to dally with Conscience, an Hell upon Earth, if justly incens'd; more to be fear'd than the Spanish Inquisition, or all the Strappado's and Torments in the World; and to take heed of Spira's principal Errors; which were to Dispute*
Satan

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with Satan over busily in time of Weakness, especially to reason and conclude from present Sense, to God's Past Reprobation and Future Damnation: Both of which is hard, if possible, for any Man to Determine in his own, much more in others Cases.

So commending thee to his Grace who is able to establish thee to the End, I bid thee Farewel, and Hope well, while the Space of Grace lasteth; *Dum Spi. as Spera*; so may'st thou take Good, and no Hurt, by reading this terrible Example.

N. B.

B

To

To the Author and Reader of this
HISTORY.

Some scatter'd Parcels of this Story lay
In foreign Leaves, which had not found away
Thus to collect, had ^S been an obvious Prey.
² never seen the Day.
Reader, wou'dst see how sinning 'gainst the Light
Will quench and leave the Soul in a sad Night
Of Discontent? Come hither then, look here
And learn all such Light-quenching Sins to fear.
Reader, wou'dst see the comfort breathing Spirit
To Grieve, what endless Grief it doth demerit?

Come hither then, look here:

Here see a Soul that's all Despair; a Man
-All Hell; a Spirit all Wounds; Who can
A Wounded Spirit bear?

Reader, wou'dst see what you may never feel,
Despair, Racks, Torments, whips of burning Steel?
Behold this Man, this Furnace in whose Heart
Sin hath created Hell, Oh, in each part,
What Flames appear!

His Thoughts all Stings; Words Swords;
Brimstone his Breath;

His Eyes Flames; Wishes Curses, Life a Death.

A thousand Deaths live in him, he not dead.

A breathing Corpse in living scalding Lead,
And yet he lives our Monuments to tell,

How black are quenched Lights?

Quench Joys are double Frights,

Black Days are double Nights.

Heav'n Tasted, Lost, a double Hell.

I've call'd thee Reader, pray so be;

Read this, that others Read not thee.

Legat Historiam,

Ne fias Historiam.

M. N.

I.

A

RELATION

Of the Fearful Estate

O F

Francis Spira.



N the Year 1548, when the glorious Sun of the Gospel was but newly risen in Europe, in the Days of the Reign of Edward the Sixth of that Name, King of England, in the Territory, and under the Jurisdiction of the City of Venice, being the very Border of Italy, in the Town of Citadella lived one Francis Spira, a Civil Lawyer, an Advocate of great Rank and Esteem, being of great Experience, of Carriage circumspect and severe.

severe, his Speech grave and composed, his Countenance sharp and austere, every way befitting that Authority whereunto he was advanc'd; endow'd with outward Blessings of Wife and eleven Children, and Wealth in abundance. What his worst Parts were, I have no other Warrant than his own Words, which if not tainted over much with the Bitterness of a desperate Mind, and bearing a Countenance rather of Passion, than of sober Confession, may seem to add a Period to all farther Commendations.

‘ Was I (*said he*) exceedingly Covetous of Money, and accordingly applied my self to get by Injustice, corrupting Justice by Deceit, inventing Tricks to delude Justice; good Causes I either defended deceitfully, or sold 'em to the Adversary perfidiously. Ill Causes I maintain'd with all my might. I wittingly opposed the known Truth; and the Trust committed unto me, I either betrayed or perverted.

Thus having worn out Forty Four Years, or thereabouts, and the News of the New, or rather *newly revived* Opinions of *Luther* coming into those Parts,

repre-

represented an Object of Novelty unto him, who being desirous to know, as he was famous for Knowledge, suffer'd not these wandering Opinions to pass unexamined; but searching into the Scripture, and into all Books of Controversies that he could get, both Old and New, and finding more than Fame or Opinion, he began to taste their Nature so well, that he Entertains, Loves, and Owns them at length; and with such Zeal, as he became a Professor, yea, a Teacher of them, first to his Wife, Children, and Family, and after to his Friends, and familiar Acquaintance; and in Comparison, seem'd to neglect all other Affairs, intending ever to press this main Point, *That we must wholly and only depend on the free and unchangeable Love of GOD, in the Death of CHRIST, as the only sure way to Salvation.* And this was the Sum of all his Discourse, which continued for the Space of Six Years, or thereabouts, even so long as the Fire could keep itself within private Walls; but at length it brake forth into publick Meetings, so as the whole Province of *Padua* dawned by the Lustre thereof. The Clergy finding the Trade of their

Pardons to decay, and their *Purgatory* to wax cold, began to bestir themselves; glossing their Actions, first with calumnious Aspersions upon the whole Profession; then more plainly striking at *Spira* with grievous Accusations.

And to effect their Purpose, some promised Labour, others Favour, some Advice, others Maintenance; all joyn to divide either his Soul from his Body, or both from God.

Now was *John Casa*, the Pope's Legate, resident at *Venice*, being by Birth a *Florentine*; and one that wanted neither Malice against those of this Way, nor Craftiness to effect his malicious Purposes; to him these Men repair with Outcries against *Spira*, that he was the Man that condemned the received Rights of the Church, eluded the Ecclesiastical Power, and scandalized the Policy thereof; one of no mean Rank, being a Man of Account and Authority, and thereunto Learned in the Scriptures, Elegant in Speech, and in one Word, a dangerous *Lutheran*, having also many Disciples, and therefore not to be Despised.

At this began the Legate to cast his Eye on the terrible Alteration that had lately

lately happen'd in *Germany*; where, by the Means of one only *Lutber*, the *Romish* Religion had suffer'd such a Blow, as that it could neither be Cured by Diffimulation, nor Defended by Power; but the Clergy must either mend their Manners, or lose their Dignities. On the other side, when he saw how Propense the common People, inhabiting in the bordering Country of *Italy*, were to entertain those new Opinions, he now thought it no time to Dispute or Persuade, but with speed repairs to the Senate, and procures Authority from them to send for *Spira*.

Spira, by this time, had consider'd with himself of the Nature of his Courage, how evident and notorious it was, and therefore subject to be Envied, by such as neither liked his Person nor Religion. He perceived that his Opinions were neither retired, nor speculative, but such as aimed at the *Romish* Faction, and a change of Policy. And that his Enemies wanted neither Power nor Occasion to call him to an Account in Publick, when he must either Apostatize, and shamefully give his former Life, yea, his own Conscience the Lie, or endure

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the utmost Malice of his dreadful Enemies; or forsake his Wife, Children, Friends, Goods, Authority, yea, his dear Country, and betake himself to a foreign People, there to endure a Thousand Miseries, that do continually wait upon a voluntary Exile.

Being thus Distracted, and tossed by restless Waves of Doubt, without Guide to trust to, or Heaven to fly to for Succours, on the sudden, God's Spirit assisting, he felt a Calm, and began to Discourse with himself in this manner.

‘ Why wandereſt thou thus in Uncertainties, unhappy Man? Cast away
‘ Fear; put on thy Shield, the Shield of
‘ Faith. Where is thy wonted Courage,
‘ thy Goodness, and Constancy? Remember that Christ's Glory lies at
‘ Stake: Suffer thou without Fear, and
‘ he will Defend thee; he will tell thee
‘ what thou shalt Answer; he can beat
‘ down all Danger; bring thee out of Prison; raise thee from the Dead. Consider *Peter* in a Dungeon; the Martyrs
‘ in the Fire. If thou makeſt a good
‘ Confession, thou may'st indeed, go to
‘ Prison, or Death, but an eternal Reward in Heaven remains for thee.
‘ What

What hast thou in this World comparable to eternal Life, to everlasting Happiness? If thou dost otherwise, think of the Scandal (*common People live by Example, thinking whatever is done, is well-done*) fear the loss of Peace and Joy; fear Death, Hell, and eternal Wrath. Or, if the Flesh be so strong as to cause thee to doubt of the Issue, fly thy Country, get thee away, tho' never so far, rather than deny the Lord of Life.

Now was *Spira* in reasonable Quiet, being resoly'd to yield to these weighty Reasons. Yet holding it Wisdom to Examine all things, he consults also with Flesh, and Blood. Thus the Battle doth renew, and the Flesh begins in this manner.

Be well advised; fond Man, consider Reason on both sides, and then Judge. How canst thou thus overcome thy Sufficiency, as thou neither regardest the Examples of thy Progenitors, nor the Judgment of the whole Church? Dost thou not consider what Misery this thy Rashness will bring thee unto? Thou shalt lose all thy Substance, gotten with so great Care and Tra-

' vail ; thou shalt undergo the most ex-
 ' quisite Torments that Malice it self
 ' can devise ; thou shalt be counted an
 ' Heretick of all ; and to close up all,
 ' thou shalt Die shamefully. What
 ' thinkest thou of the loathsome stink-
 ' ing Dungeon, the bloody Axe, or the
 ' burning Faggot? Are they delight-
 ' ful? Be wise at length, and keep
 ' thy Life and Honour ; thou may'st
 ' live to do much Good to Men, as God
 ' commands thee ; thou may'st be an
 ' Ornament to thy Country, and put
 ' case, thy Country's Loss would be of
 ' small Esteem with thee, wilt thou bring
 ' thy Friends also into Danger? Thou
 ' hast begotten Children, wilt thou now
 ' cut their Throats, and inhumanly But-
 ' cher them, who may intime bring Ho-
 ' nour to their Country, Glory to God,
 ' Help and Furtherance to his Church?
 ' Go to the *Legate*, weak Man, freely
 ' confess thy Fault, and help all these
 ' Miseries.

Thus did the Cares of this World,
 and the Deceitfulness of Riches choak
 the good Seed that was formerly sown :
 So, as fearing, he faints, and yields un-
 to the Allurements of this World ; and
 being

being thus blinded, he goes to the *Legate* at *Venice*, and salutes him with this News.

Having for these divers Years entertain'd an Opinion concerning some Articles of Faith contrary to the Orthodox, and receiv'd Judgment of the Church, and utter'd many things against the Authority of the Church of Rome, and the universal Bishop; I humbly acknowledge my Fault and Error, and my Folly in misleading others; I therefore yield my self in all Obedience to the supreme Bishop of the Church of Rome, never to depart again from the Traditions and Decrees of the holy See; I am heartily sorry for what is past, and humbly beg Pardon for so great an Offence.

The *Legate* perceiving *Spira* to faint, he pursues to the utmost; he causes a Recitation of all his Errors to be drawn in Writing, together with the Confession annexed to it, and commands *Spira* to subscribe his Name thereto, which accordingly he did; then the *Legate* commands him to return to his own Town, and there to declare this Confession of his and to acknowledge the whole Doctrine

Doctrine of the Church of *Rome* to be Holy and True, and to abjure the Opinions of *Luther*, and other such Teachers, as False and Heretical.

[*Man knows not the Beginning of Sin, but who bounds the Issues thereof?*]

Spira having once lost Footing, goes down amain, he cannot stay, nor gain-say the *Legate*, but promiseth to accomplish his whole Will and Pleasure. He soon addresseth himself for his Journey, and being onward in the Way, bethinks himself of the large Spoils he had brought away, from the Conflict with the *Legate*; what glorious Testimony he had given of his great Faith and Constancy in Christ's Cause, and to be plain, how impiously he had deny'd Christ and his Gospel at *Venice*; and what he promis'd to do farther in his own Country. And thus partly with Fear, and partly with Shame, being Confounded, he thought he heard a Voice speaking unto him in this manner:

• *Spira!* What doest thou here?
 • Whither goest thou? Hast thou, un-
 • happy Man, given thy Hand Writing
 • to the *Legate* at *Venice*? Yet see

‘ thou dost not Seal it in thine own
‘ Country. Dost thou, indeed, think
‘ eternal Life so mean, as that thou pre-
‘ ferrest this present Life before it?
‘ Dost thou well in preferring Wife and
‘ Children before Christ? Is the win-
‘ dy Applause of the People better, in-



‘ deed, than the Glory of God? And
‘ the Profession of this World's Good,
‘ more dear to thee than the Salvation
‘ of thine own Soul? Is the small life
‘ of a Moment of Time, more desira-
‘ ble than eternal Wrath is dreadful?
‘ Think with thy self, what Christ did
‘ endure for thy sake, is it not equal
‘ thou should'st suffer somewhat for
‘ him? Remember; Man, that the Suf-
‘ ferings of this present Life, are not
‘ comparable to the Glory that shall be
‘ reveal'd. If thou Sufferest with him,
‘ thou

‘ thou shalt also Reign with him, Thou
‘ canst not Answer for what thou hast
‘ already done; nevertheless the Gate
‘ of Mercy is not quite shut. Take
‘ heed that thou heapest not Sin upon
‘ Sin, lest thou Repent when it be too
‘ late.

Now was *Spira* in the Wilderness of Doubt, not knowing which Way to turn him, nor what to do; yet being arriv’d in his own Country, and among his Friends, considering what he had done, and what he had farther promis’d to do; and how the Terror of God on the one side, and the Terror of this World on the other, did continually Rack him; and therefore he desired their Advice in so doubtful a Case. His Friends, upon small Deliberation, answered, That it was requisite he should take heed that he did not in any wise betray his Wife and Children, and all his Friends into Danger; seeing, that by so small a Matter as the reciting of a little Schedule, which might be done in less Space than half an Hour, he might both free himself from present Danger, and preserve many that de-
pend

pend upon him ; adding moreover, that he could get no Credit in relenting from that which he had already in the greatest part, form'd before the *Legate* at *Venice* ; and that in the perfect Accomplishing thereof, little or no Discredit could arise, more than what by the former Action he had already sustain'd. On the other Side, if he did not perform his Promise to the *Legate*, he could neither discharge himself of the Shame which he had already incur'd, nor avoid far more heavy and insupportable Injuries, than probably he should have endur'd, if he had persisted obstinately in his former Opinions.

This was the last Blow of the Battle, and *Spira* utterly overcome, goes to the *Prætor*, and proffers to perform his Promise made to the *Legate*, who, in the mean time, had taken order to have all things ready, and had sent the Instrument of Abjuration Signed by *Spira*, to the *Prætor*, by the Hands of a certain Priest.

All that Night the miserable Man wears out with restless Cares, without any Minure of Rest ; the next Morning being come, he gets up, and being ready,

dy, desperately enters into the publick Congregation, where Mass being finished, in the presence of Friends and Enemies, and of the whole Assembly, being by Estimation, near Two Thousand People; yea, and of Heaven it self, he recites that infamous Abjuration Word for Word, as it was written. It being done, he was Fined at Thirty Pieces of Gold, which he presently paid; Five whereof were given to the Priest that brought the Abjuration, the other Five-and-Twenty were employ'd towards the making of a Shrine to put the *Eucharist* in. Then was he sent Home, and restored to his Dignities, Goods, Wife, and Children. No sooner was he departed, but he though he heard a direful Voice saying to him;

‘ Thou wicked Wretch, thou hast
 ‘ Denied me, thou hast Renounced the
 ‘ Covenant of thy Obedience; thou
 ‘ hast broken thy Vow, hence Apostate,
 ‘ bear with thee, the Sentence of thy
 ‘ eternal Damnation!

Trembling and quaking in Body and Mind, he fell down in a Swoon: Relief

was

was at hand for the Body, but from that time forward, he never found any Peace or Ease of Mind, by continuing in uncessant Torments, he protested that he was Captivated under the revenging Hand of the great God; that he heard



continually that fearful Sentence of Christ, that just Judge, that he knew he was utterly undone; that he could neither Hope for Grace, nor Christ's Intercession with God the Father in his behalf. Thus was his Fault ever heavy on his Heart, and his Judgment ever before his Eyes.

Now began some of his Friends to repent, too late, of their Rash Counsel: others, not looking so high as the just Judgment of God, laid all the Blame on his melancholy Constitution; that over-shadowing his Judgment, wrought in him

him a kind of Madness. Ev'ry one Censur'd as his Fancy led him ; yet for Remedy all agreed in this, To use both the wholesome Help of Physicians, and the pious Advice of Divines ; and therefore thought it fit to convey him to *Padua*, an University of Note, where plenty of all manner of Means was to be had.

This they accordingly did, both with his Wife, Children, and whole Family ; others also of his Friends accompanying him : And being arriv'd at the House of one *James Arden*, in *St. Leonard's* Parish, they sent for Three eminent Physicians, who upon due Observation of the Effects, and of other Symptoms of his Disease, and some private Conference one with another amongst themselves, return'd this Answer : That they could not discern that his Body was afflicted with any Danger, or Distemper originally from it self, by reason of the over-ruling of any Humour ; but that this Malady of his, did arise from some Grief or Passion of the Mind, which being over-burden'd, did so oppress the Spirits, as they wanted free Passage ; stirr'd up many ill Humours, whereof

whereof the Body of Man is full ; and these ascending up into the Brain, troubled the Fancy, shadowed the Seat of Judgment, and so corrupted it. This was the State of his Disease, and that outward Part that was visible to the Eye of Nature ; this they endeavour'd to reform by Purgation, either to consume, or at least divert the Course of those Humours from the Brain : But all their Skill effected nothing ; which made *Spira* say,

‘ Alas, poor Men! how far wide are
‘ you? Do you think, that this Dis-
‘ ease is to be cured by Potions? Be-
‘ lieve me, there must be another man-
‘ ner of Medicine ; it is neither Plaister,
‘ nor Drugs, that can help a fainting
‘ Soul, cast down with the Sense of
‘ Sin, and Wrath of God ; ’tis only
‘ Christ that must be the Physician, and
‘ the Gospel the Soul’s Antidote.

The Physicians easily believed him ; after they had understood the whole Truth of the matter, and therefore they wished him to seek some spiritual Comfort.

By this time, the Fame of this Man was spread all over *Padua*, and the neigh-

neighbouring Country ; partly, because as the Disease, so the Occasion was particularly Remarkable : For this was not done in a Corner ; so as Daily there came Multitudes of all sorts to see him ; some out of Curiosity, only to see and Discourse ; some out of a pious Desire to try all Means that might reduce him to Comfort again ; or at least, to Benefit themselves by a Spectacle of Misery, and of the Justice of God. Amongst these *Paulus Vergerius*, Bishop of *Justinopolus*, and *Matthæus Gribauldus*, deserve especially to be named, as the most principal Labourers for this Man's Comfort. They find him now about Fifty Years of Age, neither affected with the Dotage of Old Age, nor with the unconstant head-strong Passion of Youth, but in the Strength of his Experience and Judgment ; In a burning Heat, calling excessively for Drink, yet his Understanding active, quick of Apprehension, witty in Discourse, above his ordinary manner, and judiciously Opposite. His Friends labour'd with him by all fair Means to receive Nourishment, which he obstinately gain-saying, they forcibly infused some liquid Sustenance into his

his Mouth (most of which he spit out again, exceedingly chafing) and in this fretting Mood of his said.

‘ As it is true, that all things work for
‘ the best, to those that love God, so
‘ to the Wicked all are contrary: For
‘ whereas a plentiful Offspring is the
‘ Blessing of God, and his Reward, be-
‘ ing a Stay to the weak Estate of their
‘ aged Parents, to me they are a Curse
‘ of Bitterness and Vexation; they do
‘ strive to make me tire out this; I
‘ would fain be at an end. O that I
‘ were gone from hence! that some Bo-
‘ dy would let out this weary Soul!

His Friends saluted him, and asked him, What he conceived to be the Cause of his Disease? At which he broke out into a lamentable Discourse of the Passages formerly related, and that with such passionate Elocution, as caused many to Weep, and most to Tremble. They contrarily to Comfort him, propounded many of God’s Promises recorded in the Scripture, and many Examples of God’s Mercy.

My Sin (saith he) is greater than the Mercy of God.

Nay,

Nay, (answer'd they) the Mercy of God is above all Sin ; God would have all Men to be Saved.

It's true, (quoth he) He would have all that he hath Elected to be Saved ; he would not have damn'd Reprobates to be saved : I am one of that Number, I know it ; for I willingly, and against my Knowledge, denied Christ, and I feel that he Hardens, and will not suffer me to Hope.

After some Silence, one ask'd him, Whether he did not believe that Doctrine to be true, for which he was Accus'd before the Legate ? He answer'd, *I did Believe it, when I Deny'd it ; but now I neither Believe that, nor the Doctrine of the Romish Church : I Believe nothing, I have no Faith, no Trust, no Hope. I am a Reprobate, like Cain, or Judas, who casting away all Hope of Mercy fell into Dispair ; and my Friends do me great Wrong, that they suffer me not to go to the Place of Unbelievers, as I justly deserve.*

Here they began sharply to Rebuke him ; requiring and charging him, that in any wise he did not violate the Mercy of God. To which he answer'd, *The Mercy of God is exceeding large, and extends to all the Elect, but not to me, or*

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anylike to me, who are sealed up to Wrath. I tell you I deserve it ; my own Conscience Condemns me, what needs anyother Judge?

Christ came (*say they*) to take away Sin, Rom. 2. 5. And calling for a Book, they read unto him the Passion of Christ, and coming to his Nailing to the Cross, Spira said, *This indeed is Comfortable to such as are Elected ; but as for me, Wretch, they are nothing but Grief and Torment, because I contemn'd them.*

Thus roaring for Grief, and tossing himself up and down the Bed as he lay, he intreated them to Read no more.

As Gribauldus was coming to see him, Vergerius said to Spira, Dear Sir, here is Dr. Gribauldus, a Godly and Faithful Friend of yours, come to see you. He is Welcome, *said he*, but he shall find me Ill. Gribauldus replied, Sir, this is but an Illusion of the Devil, who doth what he can to Vex you ; but turn you to God with your whole Heart, and he is ready to shew you Mercy ; the Lord you know is full of Mercy, it is he that hath said, *That as often as a Sinner shall repent of his Sin, he will remember his Sin no more.* Consider this in the Example of Peter, that was Christ's Familiar and Apostle,

Apostle, who Denied him Thrice, and for all that, did not God graciously Respect him in the last Minute of his Life? is the Lord's Hand now shortned, that it cannot save?

To this *Spira* answer'd, ' If *Peter* ' Grieved and Repented, it was because ' Christ beheld him with a merciful ' Eye, and in that he was Pardon'd; it ' was not because he Wept, 'but because God was gracious to him. But ' God respects not me, and therefore ' I am a Reprobate. I feel no Comfort ' can enter into my Heart; there's only ' place there for Torments and Vex- ' ings of Spirit; I tell you, my Case is ' properly mine own; no Man was ever ' in the like Condition, and therefore my State is fearful.

Then roaring out in the Bitterness of his Spirit, said, *It's a fearful thing to fall into the Hands of the Living God!* The Violence of his Passion, and Action suitable, did amaze many of the Beholders; insomuch as some of them said, with whispering Voices, that he was Possess'd. He over-hearing it, said, Do you doubt it? I have a whole Legion of Devils which take up their Dwelling

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in me, and possess me as their own; and justly too, for I have denied Christ. *Did you it willingly, or not?* said they. That's nothing to the purpose, (*said Spira*) Christ saith, Whosoever denies Me before Men, him will I deny before my Father which is in Heaven. Christ will not be denied, no not in a Word; and therefore it is enough, though in Heart I never denied him.

They observing his Distemper arise from the Sense and Horror of the Pains of Hell, ask'd him, If he thought there were worse Pains than what he endur'd for the present? He said, That he knew there were far worse Pains than those he then suffer'd; *For the Wicked shall rise to their Judgment, but they shall not stand in Judgment, Psal. 1.* This I tremble to think of; yet I do desire nothing more than that I might come to that Place where I may be sure to feel the worst, and to be freed from Fear of Worse to come.

Ay, but you are to Consider (*said one*) that those Opinions, for which you were accus'd before the *Ligate*, were Impious, and therefore you are not to think you denied Christ, but rather that you Confess'd him, acknowledging
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the Infallible Truth of the Catholick Church. Truly, *said he*, when I did deny those Opinions, I did think them to be true, and yet I did deny them.

Go now then, *said others*, and Believe that they are true. Now I cannot (*said he*) God will not suffer me to Believe them, nor Trust in his Mercy; What would you have me to do? I would fain attain to this Power, but cannot, tho' I should presently be Burn'd for it. But, why do you (*said the other*) esteem this so great a Sin, when as the learned *Legate* constrained you to it; which surely he would not have done if your former Opinions be not Erronious? No, good *Francis*, the Devil belets thee; let not the Grievousness of any Sin (if any such be) amaze thee.

You say right, (*said Spira*) the Devil hath possess'd me, and God hath left me to his Power; for I find I can neither Believe the Gospel, nor Trust in God's Mercy; I have sinned against the Holy Ghost, and God by his immutable Decree hath bound me over to perpetual Punishment, without any Hopes of Pardon. It's true, that the Greatness of Sins, not the Multitude

of them, bind not God's Mercy ; all those Sins that in the former part of my Life I have committed, then did not so much Trouble me ; for I trusted God would not lay them to my Charge : Now, having Sinned against the Holy Ghost, God hath taken away from me all Power of Repentance, and brings all my Sins to Remembrance ; and Guilty of One, Guilty of All. And therefore it is no matter whether my Sins be great or small, few or many ; they be such as Christ's Blood, nor God's Mercy belongs not to me. *God will have Mercy on whom he will have Mercy, and whom he will he Hardneth.* This is it that gnaws my Heart, he hath Hardned me ; and I find that he daily more and more doth Harden me ; and therefore I am out of Hope ; I tell you, there was never such a Monster as I am ; never was any Man alive, such a Spectacle of exceeding Misery. I know that Justification is to be expected by Christ, and I denied and abused it, to the end I might keep this frail Life from Adversity, and my Children from Poverty ; and now behold, how Bitter

this Life is to me! and God only knows what shall become of this my Family; but sure no Good is like to betide it; but Worse and Worse, and such a Ruin at length, as one Stone shall not be left upon another.

But why should you (said Gribauldus) conceit so deeply of your Sin, seeing you cannot but know, that many have Denied Christ, yet never fell into Despair?

Well, (said he) I can see no Ground of Comfort for such; neither can I warrant them from God's revenging Hand, or that he will yet suffer such to be in Peace; and besides, there will a Time of Danger come, and they shall be thoroughly Tried; and if it were not so, yet God is Just in making me an Example to others, and I cannot justly Complain; there is no Punishment so great but I have deserved it, for this so heinous Offence: I assure you, it is no small matter to Deny Christ, and yet it is more ordinary than commonly Men do conceive of; It is not a Denial made before a Magistrate, as it is with me; for as oft as a Christian doth Dissemble the known Truth, as often as he approves of False Worship, by presenting himself at it; so often as he doth things

worthy of his Calling, so often he Denies Christ. Thus did I, and therefore am justly Punished for it.

Your Estate (quoth Gribauldus) is not so strange as you make it. Job was so far gone, that he complained God had set him as a Mark against him; and David that was a Man after God's own Heart, complained often that God had forsaken him, and was become his Enemy; yet both received Comfort again.

Comfort your self, therefore, God will come at length, though he seem a-far off.

O Brother (answer'd Spira) I Believe all this; the Devils Believe and Tremble: But David was ever Elected, and dearly beloved of God, and though he fell, yet God took not utterly away his Holy Spirit, and therefore was heard when he prayed, *Lord take not thy Holy Spirit from me!* But I am in another Case; being ever Accursed from the Presence of God; neither can I Pray as he did, because his Holy Spirit is quite gone, and cannot be recall'd, and therefore I know I shall live in continued Hardness so long as I live. Oh! that I might feel but the least Sense of the

Love of God to me, though but for one small Moment, as I now feel his heavy Wrath, that burns like Torments of Hell within me, and afflicts my Conscience with Pangs unutterable. Verily Desperation is Hell it self!

Here *Gribauidus* said, I do verily believe, *Spira*, that God having so severely Chastised you in this Life, Correcteth you in Mercy here, that he may spare you hereafter, and that he hath Mercy sealed up for you in Time to come.

Nay, said *Spira*, hence do I know that I am a Reprobate, because he afflicteth me with Hardness of Heart. O that my Body had suffered all my Life long, so that he would be pleas'd to release my Soul, and ease my Conscience, this burthen'd Conscience!

Gribauidus being willing to ease his Mind from the continual Meditation of his Sins; as also to sound how for the present he stood affected to the *Romish* Church, ask'd him what he thought became of the Souls of Men, so soon as they departed out of the Body? To which he answer'd;

Although

Although this be not so fully revealed in Scripture, yet I verily believe that the Souls of the Elect go presently to the Kingdom of Glory, and not that they Sleep in the Body, as some do imagine.

Very well, (said one of the Spectators) why do the Scriptures then say, *1 Sam. 5. 9.* that God brings down to Hell, and raiseth up, seeing it cannot be meant of the State of the Soul after Death, which as thou say'st, either goeth to Heaven without Change, or to Hell without Redemption, it must be understood of the State of the Soul in this Life, like that wherein thou art at this present; and often-times we see that God suffers Men to fall into the Jaws of Despair, and yet raiseth them up again; and therefore Despair not, but Hope; it shall be even thus with thee, in his good time.

This is the Work, (quoth *Spira*) this is the Labour? For I tell you, when I at *Venice* did first abjure my Profession, and so, as it were, drew an Indenture, the Spirit of God often admonished me, and when at *Citadella*, I did, as it were, set my Seal, the Spirit of God often

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Suggested to me, *Do not Write, Spira!*
Do not Seal! Yet resisted I the Holy



Ghost, and did both; and at that very present, I did evidently feel a Wound in my very Will; so altho' I can say, I would Believe, yet I cannot say, I will Believe. God hath denied me the Power of Will, and it befalls me in this my State, as with one that is fast in Irons, and his Friends coming to see him, do pity his State, and persuade him to shake off his Fetters, and come out of his Bonds, which, God knows, he would fain do, but cannot. This is my very case; you persuade me to Believe, how fain would I do it, but cannot. O now I cannot!

Then violently grasping his Hands together, and raising himself up,

Be-

Behold, (saith he) I am Strong, yet by little and little I Decay and Consume; and my Servants would fain preserve this weary Life, but at length the Will of God must be done, and I shall perish miserably, as I deserve. Rejoice ye Righteous in the Lord, blessed are you whose Hearts the Lord hath mollified.

Then after some Pause, he went on, I earnestly desire to pray to God with my Heart, yet I cannot; I see my Damnation, and I know my Remedy is only in Christ, yet I cannot set my self to take hold on it. Such are the Punishments of the Damned, they repent of their Loss of Heaven, they cannot mend their Ways.



As he was thus speaking, he observed
divers Flies that came about him, and
lighted

lighted on him; *Behold*, said he, now also *Belzebub* comes to his Banquet; you shall shortly see my End; and in me, an Example to many, of the Justice and Judgment of God.

About this Time came in Two Bishops (with divers Scholars of the University) one of them *Paulus Vergerius*, having observ'd *Spira* more than any other, being continually Conversant with him, told him, That his State was such, as rather stood in need of Prayer than Advice; and therefore desir'd him to Pray with him in the Lord's-Prayer: *Spira* consented, and he began.

[*Our Father which art in Heaven,*]

Then breaking forth into Tears, he stop'd, but they said, It is well, your Grief is a good Sign.-----

I bewail, said he, my Misery, for I perceive I am forsaken of God, and cannot call to him from my Heart, as I was wont to do.-----

Yet let us go on, said *Vergerius*.

[*Thy Kingdom come.*]

O Lord, said *Spira*, bring me also into this Kingdom ; I beseech Thee shut me not out.

[*Give us this Day our daily Bread.*]

O Lord, *added he*, I have enough, and abundance to feed this Carcase of mine, but there is another Bread ; I humbly beg, the Bread of thy Grace, without which, I know I am but a dead Man.

[*Lead us not into Temptation.*]

Seeing, Lord, that I am brought into Temptation, help me, Lord, that I may escape ; the Enemy hath overcome, help me, I beseech thee, to overcome this cruel Tyrant.

These things he spake with a mournful Voice, the Tears trickling down abundantly, and expressing such Affection and Passion, as turned the Bowels of those there present with Grief and Compunction.

They then turning to *Spira*, said, You know that none can call Christ Jesus, *the Lord*, but by the Holy Ghost : You must

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must therefore think of your self, according to their soft Affection, which you express in your Prayers; inferring thereby, that God hath not wholly cast you off, or bereav'd you of his Spirit utterly.

I perceive (said *Spira*) that I call to him to my eternal Damnation; for I tell you again, it is a new and unheard of Example, that you find in me.

If *Judas*, said they, had but out-lived his Days, which by Nature he might have done, he might have Repented, and Christ would have received him to Mercy, and yet he Sinned most grievously against his Master, which did so esteem him, as to Honour him with the Dignity of an Apostle, and did maintain and feed him.

He answer'd, Christ did also Feed and Honour me, neither yet is my Fault one jot less than that of his, because it is no more Honour to be personally present with Christ in the Flesh, than to be in his Presence by Illumination of his Holy Spirit. Besides, I deny that ever *Judas* could have Repented how long soever he had liv'd; for Grace was quite taken from him, as it is now with me.

O *Spira*, said they, you know you are in a Spiritual Desertion, you must therefore not belive what Satan suggests; he was ever a Liar from the Beginner, and a meer Impostor, and will cast a Thousand Lying Fancies into your Mind, to beguile you withal; you must rather believe those whom you judge to be in a good State, and more able to discern of you than your self: Believe us, and we tell you, That God will be merciful unto you.

‘ There is the Knot (said *Spira*)
‘ would I could Believe, but I cannot.

Then he began to reckon up what fearful Dreams and Visions he was continually troubled withal; that he saw the Devils come flocking into the Chamber and about his Bed, Terrifying him with strange Noises; that those were not Fancies, but that he knew them as really as the Standers by. And that besides these outward Terrors, he felt continually a racking Torture in his Mind, and a continual Butchery of his Conscience, being the very proper Pangs of the Damned Wights in Hell.

Cast away these Fancies (said *Gri-
bauldus*) these are but Illusions, Hum-
ble

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ble your self in the Presence of God, and praise him.

“ The Dead praise not the Lord,
“ (answer’d he) nor they that go down
“ into the Pit. We that are drowned in
“ Despair, are dead, and already gone
“ down into the Pit: What Hell can be
“ worse than Desperation, or what greater
“ Punishment? The gnawing Worm,
“ unquenchable Fire, Horror, Confusi-
“ on, and (which is worse than all)
“ Desperation it self, continually tor-
“ ments me; and now I count my pre-
“ sent State worse than if my Soul sepa-
“ rated from my Body, were with Judas,
“ and the rest of the Damned, and there-
“ fore now desire rather to be there, than
“ to live in the Body.

One being present, repeated certain Words of the Psalms, *If thy Children forsake the Law, and walk not in my Judgments, I will visit their Transgressions with Rods, and their Iniquity with Stripes; nevertheless my loving Kindness I will not utterly take from them, nor suffer my Faithfulness to fail.* Mark this, O Spira, My Covenant I will not break.

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These Promises (said *Spira*) belong only to the Elect, which if Tempted, may fall into Sin, but are again lifted up, and recover'd out, as the Prophet saith; *Though he fall, he shall not be utterly cast down; for the Lord upholdeth him*; therefore *Peter* could rise, for he was Elected; but the Reprobates when they fall, cannot rise again, as appears in *Cain*, *Saul*, and *Judas*. God deals one way with the Elect, and another with the Reprobate.

The next Day he Prayed with them in the *Latin* Tongue, and that with excellent Affection, as outwardly appeared. Blessed be God, (said *Vergerius*) these are no Signs of Eternal Reprobation, you must not O *Spira*, seek out the secret Counsels of God's Election and Reprobation; for no Man can know, so long as he lives, whether by his good or bad Deeds, he be worthy of God's Love or Anger. Do you not know, that the Prophet *David* complained, that God had cast off his Soul?

' I know all this, quoth *Spira*, I know
' the Mercies of God are infinite, and
' do surpass the Sins of the whole
' World, and that they are effectual
' to all that believe; but this Faith,
' and

' and this Hope is the Gift of God :
 ' O that he would give it me ! But
 ' it is as impossible, as to drink up the
 ' Sea at a Draught : As for that of
 ' Solomon, if he had ever tasted that
 ' which I feel by woeful Experience,
 ' he would never have spoken as he
 ' did ; but the Truth is, never had
 ' Mortal Man such an evident Expe-
 ' rience of God's Anger and Hatred
 ' against him as I have. You that
 ' are in a good State, think Repen-
 ' tance and Faith to be a work of great
 ' Facility : And therefore you think
 ' it an easy matter to persuade Men to
 ' believe ; The Whole need not the
 ' Physician ; and he that is Well, can
 ' soon give Counsel to such as are Ill ;
 ' but this is the Hell to me ; my Heart
 ' is hardened, I cannot believe ; many
 ' are called, but few are chosen.

Upon what Ground (said they) do
 you conceive so ill an Opinion of your
 self ?

' I once did know God to be my
 ' Father, not only by Creation, but by
 ' Regeneration ; I knew him by his
 ' beloved Son, the Author and Finish-
 ' er of our Salvation ; I could pray to
 ' him

‘ him and Hope for Pardon of Sin from
‘ him, I had a Taste of his Sweetness,
‘ Peace and Comfort; now contrarily, I
‘ know God not as a Father, but as
‘ an Enemy: What more? My Heart
‘ hates God, and seeks to get above
‘ him. I have nothing else to fly to,
‘ but Terror and Despair.

Belike you think, then (said they)
that those that have the Earnest and
first Fruits of God’s Spirit, may, not-
withstanding fall away.

‘ The Judgments of God are a deep
‘ Abyss, said he, we are soon Drown-
‘ ed if we enter into them; he that
‘ thinketh he standeth, let him take
‘ heed lest he fall; as for my self I
‘ know I am fallen back, and that I
‘ once did know the Truth, though it
‘ may not be so thoroughly; I know
‘ not what to say, but that I am one
‘ of that Number which God hath
‘ threatned to tear in Pieces.

Say not so, answer’d they, for God
may come, though at the last Hour;
keep hold therefore at the Last by
Hope.

‘ This quoth he, is my Case; I tell
‘ you, I cannot; God hath Deprived
‘ me

' me of Hope ; this brings Terror to
 ' my Mind, and pines this Body which
 ' now is so Weak, as it cannot per-
 ' form the several Offices thereof :
 ' For as the Elect have the Spirit tes-
 ' tifying that they are the Sons of
 ' God ; so the Reprobates, even while
 ' they do live, do often feel a Worm
 ' in their Conscience, whereby they
 ' are condemned already : And there-
 ' fore as I perceived this Wound in-
 ' flicted on my Mind and Will, I knew
 ' that I wanted the Gifts of Saving
 ' Grace, and that I was utterly un-
 ' done. God chasteneth his Children
 ' with temporary Afflictions, that they
 ' may come as Gold out of the Fire ; but
 ' punishing the Wicked with Blindness
 ' in their Understandings, and Hardness
 ' of Heart, and Woe be to such, from
 ' whom God takes his Holy Spirit.

Here one Rebuked him, and told
 him he gave too much credit to Sense,
 that he was not to believe himself, but
 rather him that was in good Estate, and
 I testify unto you (said he) that God will
 be merciful to you.

' Nay, answer'd he, again, Because I
 ' am in this ill State, therefore can I
 ' believe

' believe nothing but what is contra-
' ry to my Salvation and Comfort;
' but you that are so soon confident
' of our good Estate, look that it
' be true, for it is no such small
' matter to be assur'd of Sincerity. A
' Man had need be exceeding strong-
' ly Grounded in the Truth, before
' he can be able to Affirm such a Mat-
' ter as ye now do; It's not the Per-
' formance of a few formal Duties,
but a mighty constant Labour, with
' all Intention of Heart and Affection,
' with full desire and Endeavour con-
' tinually, to set forth God's Glory,
' there must be neither Fear of Lega-
' tors, Inquisitors, Prisons, nor any
' Death whatsoever: Many think them-
' selves happy, that are not; it is not
' every one that saith, *Lord, Lord*, that
' shall go to Heaven.

They came another Day, and found
him with his Eyes shut, as if he had been
Drouzie, and very Loath to Dis-
course; at which time there came
in also a grave Man from *Citadella*,
who demanded of *Spira*, if he knew
him or not? He lifting up his *Eys*-
lids, and not suddenly remembering
him

him, the Man said to him, *I am Presbyter, Antonio Fontausie*; I was with you at *Venice*, some eight Weeks since, ‘ O
‘ cursed Day, said *Spira*! Oh cursed day!
‘ Oh that I had never gone thither!
‘ Would to God I had then died!

Afterwards came in a Priest call’d *Bernardius Sardonius* bringing with him a Book of Exorcisms, to conjure this Devil; whom, when *Spira* saw, shaking his Head, said;

‘ I am verily perswaded, indeed, that
‘ God hath left me to the Power of the
‘ Devil: But such they are, as are not
‘ to be found in your Litany; neither
‘ will they be cast out by Spells.

The Priest proceeding in his intended Purpose, with a strange and uncouth Gesture, and with a loud Voice, adjur’d the Spirit to come in *Spira*’s Tongue, and to answer: *Spira* deriding his fruitless Labour, with a Sigh turned from him.

A Bishop being there present, said to *Spira*, Brother, God hath put Virtue into the Word and Sacraments, and we have us’d the one Means, and we find not that Effect which we desire; shall we try the Efficacy of the Sacraments? Surely if you take it as a pure Christian ought

to receive the Body and Blood of Christ, it will prove a Sovereign Medicine for your Sick Soul.

This I cannot do (answer'd he) for those that have no Right to the Promises, have no Right to the Seals. The Eucharist was appointed only for Believers; if we have no Faith, we eat and drink Judgment to our selves. I receiv'd it about a Month since; but I did not well in so doing, for I took it by Constraint; and so I took it to my deeper Condemnation.

Here *Vergerius* began to importune him earnestly to beware that he did not wilfully resist Grace, and put himself out of Heaven, charging him vehemently, by all the Love that was between them, by the Love that he bare to his Children, yea, to his own Soul, that he would set himself seriously to return to that Faith and Hope which once he had in the Death of Christ, with many such like Words: *Spira* having heard much of the like Matter formerly, and being somewhat moved, said, You do but repeat *Vergerius*, What should I hope? Why should I Believe? God hath taken Faith from me, shew me then whither

ther I shall go; shew me a Heaven whereto I shall retire. You tell me of God's Mercy, when as God hath cast me off. You tell me of Christ's Intercession, I have Denied him. You Command me to Believe, I say, I cannot; you bring me no Comfort: your Command is as impossible for me to Obey, as to keep the Moral Law. If you should persuade one to Love God with all his Heart, Soul, and Strength, and God gives him no Power, can he perform your Desire? Doth not the Church teach us to Sing, *Direct us, O Lord, to keep thy Commandments*? Hypocrites say, they Love God with all their Hearts, but they Lye; for my part, I will not Lye, but tell you plainly, such is my Case, that though you should never so much Importune me to Hope or Believe, though I desire it, yet I cannot. For God, as a Punishment of my Wickedness, hath taken away from me all his saving Graces, as Faith, Hope, and all. I am not the Man therefore that you take me for. Belike you think I delight in this State; If I could but conceive the least Spark of Hope of

a better State, hereafter, I would not refuse to endure the most heavy Weight of the Wrath of that Great G O - D, yea, for Twenty Thousand Years, so that I might at length attain to the End of that Misery, which I now know to be Eternal. ----- But I tell you, my Will is Wounded. Who longs more to Believe than I do? ----- But all the Ground-Work of Hope is gone! ----- For, if the Testimonies of the Holy Scriptures be True (as they are certainly True) is not this as True, *Who-soever Denies me before Men, him (says Christ) will I deny before my Father which is in Heaven?*

Is not this justly my Case, (*continued he*) as if it had been intended against this very Person of mine? -- And I pray you, What shall become of such as Christ denieth, seeing there is no other Name under Heaven whereby you look to be Saved?

What saith Saint Paul to the Hebrews? ----- *It is impossible for those who were once Enlightned, and have Tasted of the Heavenly Gifts, and were Partakers of the Holy Ghost, if they fall away,*

to be renew'd to Repentance. What can be more plain against me? Is not that Scripture also, *If we Sin wilfully after we have received the Knowledge of Truth, there remaineth no more Sacrifice for Sin, but a looking for Judgment.* The Scripture speaks of me; St. Paul means me; St. Peter tells me, *It had been better I had never known the Way of Righteousness, than after I had known it, to turn from the holy Commandment.* It had been better I had not known, and yet then my Condemnation had been most certain. Do you not see evidently that I have wilfully deny'd the known Truth? I may justly expect, not only Damnation, but Worse, if Worse may be imagin'd. God will have me undergo the just Punishment of my Sin, and make me an Example of his Wrath for your Sakes.

The Company present admired his Discourse, so grievously Accusing himself of his fore-past Life; so gravely and wisely Debating, concerning the Judgments of God, that they then were Convinc'd, that it was not Frenzy, or Madness, that had possess'd him; and being, as it were, in Admiration of his State,

State, *Spira* proceeded again in this manner.

‘ Take heed to yourselves, it is no
‘ light or easy Matter to be a Christi-
‘ an ; it is not Baptism, or Reading of
‘ the Scriptures, or Boasting of Faith
‘ in Christ, (although even these are
‘ good) that can prove one to be an
‘ Absolute Christian. You know what
‘ I said before, there must be a Confor-
‘ mity in Life. A Christian must be
‘ Strong, Unconquerable, not carrying
‘ an obscure Profession, but Resolute,
‘ expressing the Image of Christ, and
‘ holding out against all Oppositi-
‘ ons to the last Breath ; he must give
‘ all Diligence, by Righteousness and
‘ Holiness, to make his Calling and
‘ Election sure. Many they are that
‘ snatch at the Promises in the Gospel,
‘ as if they undoubtedly did belong to
‘ them, and yet remain Sluggish and
‘ Careless, and being Flattered by the
‘ Things of this present World, they pass
‘ on their Course in Quietness and Secu-
‘ rity, as if they were the only Happy
‘ Men, whom nevertheless the Lord
‘ in his Providence hath ordained to
‘ Eternal Wrath, as you may see in St.

‘ Luke’s rich Man. Thus it was with me, therefore take Heed.

Then came one of his Nephews, and offer’d him some Sustenance, which he disdainfully refusing, so moved the young Man’s Choler, that he charg’d him with Hypocrisy and Dissimulation, or Frenzy, to whom Spira gravely answer’d, and said, *You may interpret the Matter as you will, but I am sure, I am not only the Actor, but the Argument and Matter of the Tragedy. I would it were Frenzy either feigned or true; for if it were feign’d, I could then put it off at Pleasure, if it were a real Frenzy, yet there was some Hope of God’s Mercy, whereas now there is none: For I know God has pronounc’d me an Enemy, and guilty of High-Treason against his Majesty. I am cast away as a Vessel of his Wrath, yet dare you call it Dissembling and Frenzy? And can you mock at the formidable Example of the heavy Wrath of God, that should teach you Fear and Terror? But it is natural for the Flesh, either out of Malice or Ignorance, to speak perversely of the Works of God. The Natural Man discerneth not the Things that be of God, because they are spiritually discern’d.*

How

How can it be, (said Gribauldus) that you can thus excellently Discourse of the Judgment of God, and of the Graces of his Holy Spirit? What! you find the Want of them, and earnestly desire them, and yet you think you are utterly depriv'd of them!

Take this for certain, (said he) *I want the main Grace of all, and that which is absolutely Necessary; and God doth many times extort most true and strange Testimonies of his Majesty's Justice and Mercy, yet out of the Mouths of meer Reprobates: For even Judas, after he had betray'd his Master, was constrain'd to confess his sin, and to justify the Innocency of Christ; and therefore if I do the like, it is no new or strange matter. God hath taken Faith from me, and left other common Gifts, for my deeper Condemnation. By how much the more I remember what I had, and hear others Discourse of what they have, by so much the more is my Torment, in that I know what I want, and know there is no Way to be reliev'd!*

Thus spake he, the Tears all the while trickling down; professing that his Pangs were such, as that the

Damned Wights in Hell endure not the like Misery ; that his State was worse than that of *Cain*, or *Judas*, and therefore he desir'd to Die.

Yet behold (said he) the Scriptures are accomplish'd in me, They shall desire to Dye, and Death shall fly from them.

And verily he seemed exceedingly to fear lest his Life should be drawn out yet longer, finding no Ease nor Rest, ever and anon crying out, *O miserable Wretch ! O miserable Wretch !* Then turning to the Company, he besought them in this manner.

O Brethren ! take a diligent Heed to your Life ; make more Account of the Gift of God's Spirit than I have done. Learn to bewail my Misery : think not you are assured Christians, because you understand something of the Gospel ; take heed you grow not Secure on that Ground ; be constant and immoveable in the Maintainance of your Profession ; Confess even until Death, if you be call'd thereto ; he that loveth Father and Mother, Brothers, Sisters, Sons, Daughters, Kindreds, Houses, or Lands, more than Christ, is not worthy of him.

These

These Words (*said they*) do not sound like the Words of a wicked Reprobate.

‘ I do but here imitate (*said Spira*)
‘ the rich Glutton in the Gospel, who,
‘ tho’ in Hell, was careful that his Bre-
‘ thren should not come to that Place
‘ of Torment. And I say to you, Bre-
‘ thren, Take heed of this miserable
‘ Estate wherein I am.

Then turning himself to certain young Men that were present, he desired them to conceive him aright.

‘ I do not speak this, (*said he,*) to
‘ derogate from the Certainty of saving
‘ Faith, and the Promises of the Gos-
‘ pel, for they are most sure; but take
‘ heed of Relying on that Faith that
‘ works not a holy and unblameable
‘ Life, worthy of a Believer. Credit
‘ me, it will fail; I have try’d; I pre-
‘ sum’d I had gotten the right Faith;
‘ I preach’d it to others; I had all
‘ Places in Scripture in Memory, that
‘ might support it; I thought my self
‘ sure, and in the mean time living
‘ Impiously and Carelessly, and behold
‘ now the Judgment of God hath o-
‘ vertaken me, not to Correction, but

' to Condemnation. ----- And now
 ' you would have me to Believe, but
 ' it will not be; for I feel too late,
 ' that good Things belong only to
 ' such as are good, whose Sins are
 ' cover'd with Christ's Death and Blood
 ' as with a Veil, and guarded with his
 ' righteous Merits, from the Flood of
 ' God's Wrath, even as with a mighty
 ' Wall, lest miserable Mortals should
 ' be swallow'd up with the Greatness
 ' of their Sins. But as for me, I have
 ' as it were, wilfully with my Hands
 ' pull'd down the Ramparts, behind
 ' which I might have rested in Safety.
 ' And now are the swelling Waters
 ' come even to my Soul, and I am cast
 ' away!

One of his familiar Friends chanc'd
 to say, That certainly he was overcome
 with Melancholly; which being over-
 heard, *Spira* answer'd.

' Well, be it so, (*reply'd he*) seeing
 ' you will needs have it so. Thus also
 ' is God's Wrath manifested against
 ' me, in that he hath taken from me the
 ' Use of my Understanding and Reason,
 ' so as I can neither rightly Esteem
 ' and Judge of my Distemper, nor
 ' Hope

* Hope of Remedy. You see, Brethren,
* what a dangerous thing it is, to stop
* or stay in things that concern God's
* Glory; especially to Dissemble upon
* any Terms. What a fearful thing it
* is to be near, and almost a Christi-
* an? Never was the like Example
* to this of mine, and therefore if you
* be Wise, you will seriously Consi-
* der thereof. ---- O that God would
* let loose his Hand from me, that it
* were with me now, as in time past! I
* would scorn all Threats of the most
* cruel Tyrants, bear Torments with
* invincible Resolution, Glory in the
* outward Profession of Christ, 'till I
* were choak'd in the Flames, and my
* Body consum'd to Ashes.

You say you are Desperate, O *Spira*,
(said they) Why then do you not strive
with some Weapon or other, violently
to make an End of your Life, as Des-
perate Men use to do?

Let me have a Sword, (said Spira.)

Why, what would you do with it?
(quoth they.)

*I cannot tell you (said he) what this
Mind would move me to upon Occasion,
nor what I would do.*

They perceiving small Effects of all this their Labour, but rather that he grew worse ; for the avoiding of a Concourse of People ; for every Day seldom fewer than Twenty continued with him ; and to stop the Course of Fame, which was continually blown abroad of him, they consulted to carry him back again into his own Country ; and those of his Friends that came to Comfort him, began to take their last Leave of him. *Vergerius*, among the rest, requir'd, That at their Parting, they might Pray together with him. *Spira* hardly consented, and as unwillingly performed ;

For, (*said he*,) my Heart is estranged from God ; I cannot call him Father from my Heart ; all good Motions are quite gone ; my Heart is full of Malediction, Hatred, and Blasphemy against God ; I find I grow more and more Hardned in Heart, and cannot stop nor hold my self : Your Prayers for me shall turn to your own Profit, they cannot do me any Good.

Vergerius then came to take his Leave of him ; whom *Spira* embracing, said ;
Although

‘ Although I know that nothing can
‘ bring any Benefit to me a Repro-
‘ bate ; but that every Thing shall tend
‘ to my deeper Condemnation ; yet I
‘ give you most hearty Thanks for
‘ your kind Office, of the Love and
‘ good Will ; and the Lord return it
‘ unto you, with a plentiful Increase of
‘ all good.

The next Day being brought down
to his intended Journey, by the Way,
looking round about him, with a ghastly
Look, he saw a Knife, lying on a Table,
to which he running hastily, snatch’d
hold of it, as intending to Mischief him-
self ; but his Friends laying hold of him,
stopp’d him in his purpose —

Whereupon, with Indignation, he said,
*I would I were above God, for I know he
will have no Mercy on me.*

Thus went he Homewards, often
saying, That he envy’d the Condition
of *Cain* and *Judas* : He lay about eight
Weeks in this Condition, in a continual
Burning, neither desiring, nor receiving
any thing but by force, and that without
Digestion, so spent, that he appear’d a
perfect Anatomy, expressing to the View
nothing but Sinews and Bones ; vehe-

56 *A Relation of the Fearful*

nothing but Sinews and Bones ; vehemently raging for Drink ; ever Pining, yet fearful to live long ; dreadful of Hell, yet coveting Death, in a continual Torment, yet his own Tormentor. And thus consuming himself with Grief and Horror, Impatience and Despair, like a living Man in Hell, he represented an extraordinary Example of the Justice and Power of God.

And thus (as far as appeareth) within a few Days after his arrival at his own Home, he departed this present Life. Yet an Occasion to make us remember, That secret things belongs unto the Lord our God, but Charity to Man, to teach him to Hope all things.



A
RELATION

Of the Fearful Estate

O F

John Child.

HE was Born at *Bedford*, about the Year 1638; and when he was grown up, put an Apprentice to an Handicraft Trade; which, when he came to Age, he follow'd for some-time; afterwards he betook himself to another Calling; and removed to *Newport Pagnel*, where he lived divers Years, married Twice, and by his last Wife (of honest Parentage, and good Report) he had several Children; after his second Marriage, in appearance he increas'd in his Estate. About First Years

Years since he remov'd to *London*, and in *October 1684*, he ended his Days by Hanging himself in a House he had taken the Spring before in *Brick-Lane* near *Spittle-Fields*.

He was endu'd with a competent Measure of Natural Parts, and Vivacity of Spirit. In his Youth he apply'd himself to the Reading and Studying of the Scriptures, and attain'd to a greater Knowledge in Matters of Religion, than many of his Equals in Years and Education. In his Opinion and Practice he was for the Baptism of Believers, and consorted with some of them who are called *Anabaptists*, for above Twenty Years; and for divers Years, at Seasons, exercis'd himself in Preaching.

He was observ'd for some Years before his dreadful Fall, to be very remiss in Religious Exercises; and in his ordinary Conversation to frequent other Company than he had done in former Times.

He was of a very haughty Spirit, and peremptory in asserting his Opinions. He sought to exalt himself above what became either his Profession, or Attainments.

ments. All which, when the Hand of God was heavy upon him, he freely acknowledged, with severe Charges against himself for his Pride and Hypocrisy, as you will find in the following Relations.

In the Year 1682, he publish'd *A Second Argument* for a more full and firm Union amongst all good Protestants; which Title, it seems, was made up of Words softer than Oyl, yet were they as drawn Swords, and cast him into some Distress of Mind, which he only signify'd to some of his intimate Acquaintance, that his Mind was perplext for what he had therein done.

About the beginning of *July* 1684, he could not bear or conceal the Horrors of his Mind, but spake of it to some, and sent to several others of his Acquaintance, to come to him, to whom he disclos'd his miserable Condition, and the Occasion thereof, in such manner, as that it became publickly known, and occasion'd great Talk, and a daily Resort of a vast Concourse of People: Among the rest, Mr. Dennis has given the World this Narrative following.

My

MY Acquaintance (*says he*) with Mr. Child, was about 15 Years standing. About two Years since, meeting with a Book of his, I went presently and gave him a Visit, and found him in his Chamber, in a very pensive Posture, and his Eyes red with Tears. He immediately acknowledg'd he was the Author of it, and bitterly exclaim'd against himself, that he wrote it in Malice, and by the Instigation of the Devil, from very ill Principles of Pride, Vain-Glory, and Hypocrisy. I quickly found the Wound upon his Spirit was very deep, and therefore forbore all Aggravations, and endeavour'd to administer some spiritual Relief to him.

After this, in his Discourse to others, he seem'd not to have so sharp a Sense upon his Mind; but, for ought I could observe, the Sore continu'd festering inwardly, from the first time he reflected upon his publishing of that Book, to the end of his miserable Life; tho' it break not out openly till about *July*.

About *August* I gave him another Visit, and then found him (tho' naturally of a strong Constitution, and lively Spirit)

Spirit) so exceedingly shaken, that the Horror of the Sight made such deep Impressions, as I think will, at all Seasons, recur, and set itself before me afresh, as long as I live. His Speech was very regular, which discovered his Memory to be good, and that his Distemper had not seiz'd his Head, but his Heart. He freely discover'd the Grief of his Mind, expressing and setting forth his Condition to be most deplorable, as having no Hopes of Salvation. I laid before him with the greatest Tenderness, the Freeness and Riches of God's Grace, chusing to argue from his own former declared Opinion, against the Limiting of it, but could fasten no Word of Consolation, or Hope upon him.

With some Reluctancy he granted me Liberty to pray with him, but said, -----His Spirit was shut up, he could not pray. And whilst I was praying, he often groaned; and after I had ended, told me, -----God would make him a terrible Example to this present Age; and tho' he was full of Benignity, yet he was also a terrible God, being provoked.

These

These Expressions, and the Horror that appeared in his Eyes, and all Parts of his Body, drew many Tears from mine Eyes, and render'd the Spectacle so dreadful, that I cannot say (as is reported of one that visited *Francis Spira*, that he would go a Thousand Miles to see another *Spira*, but on the contrary) I desire I may never see the like Spectacle again whilst I live in the World.

He told me he thought (either in a Dream, or when he was awake, he could not tell which) that I should say to him, If he dy'd the common Death of all Men, the Lord had not spoken by me. I answer'd, He better knew the Temper of my Spirit and Principles, than to conceive such a Thought of me, or that I should take up the Words of the Prophet of God divinely inspir'd, and apply them to him. But all I could say, abated nothing of the Horror of his Soul, that I could perceive.

Thus Mr. *Dennis*, who so earnestly solicited him to lay hold on the Free Grace of God, yet he was altogether fear'd and harden'd, under the daily Prayers and Efforts of good and gracious

ous Men; continuing still more desperate, to the great Affliction of all his Friends and Relations, who commiserated his Case in a tender and compassionate manner.

About the middle of July, 1684, Mr. Keach went to see Mr. Child, to whom Mr. Child own'd was the Author of the aforesaid Book, with bitter and dolorous Outcries, upbraiding himself with Malice and Envy against the People of God, desiring him to go up stairs with him, and then farther signify'd to him his deplorable Condition, and what Horror and Anguish of Soul he lay under, and that there was no Mercy for him.

Soon after Mr. K. was sent for by him, who found him in Bed rolling and tumbling up and down in a lamentable manner, enough to pierce one's Heart. He said to him, --- Mr. Child, *I thought by your Deportment, when you was at my House, the Burden was pretty well off: Or to that Effect.*

Mr. Child. *No, no, my Burden is greater than I can bear.---I would fain be satisfied as touching one thing.*

Mr.

Mr. Keach. What is that?

Mr. Child. *Whether my Sin may not be that against the Holy Ghost?*

Mr. K. I hope and believe it is not.

Mr. Child. *But I wrote the Book out of Malice.*

Mr. K. There is a great deal of Difference between doing a thing out of Malice and Prejudice against the Lord's People, and acting out of Malice against Christ himself or doing Despite to the Spirit of Grace. I do not doubt but that you had always holy and reverend Dread and Respect to the Name of God, tho' you might take up a great Offence against some of his People.

Mr. Child. I have often had the Scripture brought to me, *Psalms 50. 23. 20. Thou givest thy Mouth to Evil, and with thy Tongue thou forgest Deceits; Thou sittest and speakest against thy Brother, and slanderest thy Mother's Son. And of that which follows: Consider this, ye that forget God, lest I tare you in pieces.*

Mr. Keach. But pray observe, Tho' you should be guilty of that great Evil there mentioned, yet there is Ground of Hope, in that you are exhorted to consider.

consider. And used many Arguments to perswade him to rely on the Mercy of God, thro' Christ, mentioning that Passage of the Prophet *David*, *Forgive me my Sin, for it is great*; and how wonderfully he had manifested and magnified the Attribute of his Mercy, in pardoning great and bloody Sinners.

Here Mr. Child breaking forth into bitter Tears, cried out, *I know that the Majesty of Heaven is a good and gracious Being; yet when provoked, (stretching forth his Hands in a frightful Manner) he is a terrible God.*

Mr. Keach. I think it necessary that you retract what you have written in that Book; for that I think nothing short of it, will be a Demonstration of the Sincerity of your Heart, and Proof of the Truth of your Repentance.

Mr. Child. *I have began to write, but I cannot write, neither have I any one of the Books.*

Mr. Keach. I will see and get you one of them, and send it you. Shall I acquaint any Person with your Condition (mentioning some worthy Ministers to him, whom he knew Mr. Child formerly had a great Esteem for.)

Mr.

Mr. Keach, at another Visit, not long before his Death, perceiving the Anguish of his Spirit was rather greater than ever, ask'd him, *Have you not yet any more Light?*

Mr. Child. No, nor never shall.

Mr. Keach. Shall I and two or three more, such as you shall approve of, come and spend some Time in Prayer to the Lord for you? To which he gave no Answer, tho' much press'd to it.

Mr. Child, at another Time said, *I have touch'd the Apple of God's Eye. — I am damn'd.*

Soon after Mr. Collings went to visit him, and finding him very restless, Mr. Collings said to him, Oh, Mr. Child, I am come with a Design to serve your Soul, if it lies in my Power!

Mr. Child. *God hath been for several Years past, a tearing my Estate, cursing and blasting all I have put my Hand to, and prosper'd me in nothing. — And, in much Horror clapping his Hands to his Heart, cry'd, Here it is, and I shall dye!*

Mr. Collings. I am inform'd your Troubles arise from the Publishing of a Book, entituled, *The second Argument for*

for a more firm Union amongst Protestants. What Part of that Book troubles you most?

Mr. Child. (Taking up the Book in his Hand, began to read, where he says) *The greatest Number of Dissenters do hold Principles dangerously Heretical, and most abominably abusing the most holy and blessed God, &c.* But before he could end this Paragraph, being under extream Agony of Mind, and weeping bitterly, put the Book from him, and spake to this effect, viz. *I have represented those of Calvin's Principles beyond whatever they conceived, strained their Opinions beyond their Intentions, and drawn such Consequences as never were in their Minds.*— And striking his Breast with much Anguish, said, *These Words lie close, I shall never get over this; I writ in Prejudice against them, calling them a villainous Body of People, which was unjust.*

Mr. Collings said, Are you heartily sorrowful for writing this?

Mr. Child. *Oh that I could repent! I cannot repent.*

Mr. Collings. If it were now to do, would you do it again? The best Part of Repentance is to turn from Evil.

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for a more firm Union amongst Protestants. What Part of that Book troubles you most?

Mr. Child. (Taking up the Book in his Hand, began to read, where he says) *The greatest Number of Dissenters do hold Principles dangerously Heretical, and most abominably abusing the most holy and blessed God, &c.* But before he could end this Paragraph, being under extream Agony of Mind, and weeping bitterly, put the Book from him, and spake to this effect, viz. *I have represented those of Calvin's Principles beyond whatever they conceived, strained their Opinions beyond their Intentions, and drawn such Consequences as never were in their Minds.*

And striking his Breast with much Anguish, said, *These Words lie close, I shall never get over this; I writ in Prejudice against them, calling them a villainous Body of People, which was unjust.*

Mr. Collings said, Are you heartily sorrowful for writing this?

Mr. Child. *Oh that I could repent! I cannot repent.*

Mr. Collings. If it were now to do, would you do it again? The best Part of Repentance is to turn from Evil.

Mr.

Mr. Child. *I know there is in Repentance three Things, Confession, Contrition and Restitution.*

Mr. Collings. We are not capable of making God Restitution; He pardons and justifies for his own Name's sake, and Christ's sake; but Restitution is to be made to our Neighbour; and if you are sensible God had been dishonour'd and his People wrong'd in that Book, your next Work is to make Restitution in like Manner, by a publick Recantation.

Mr. Child. *This is the Opinion of some others also, and I think it ought to be done.*

— And walking about the Room, with great Horror of Soul, said, —
I have been guilty of many Evils, I have for several Years liv'd a very ungodly Life; neglected Family-Duty, Closet-Duty, Publick Duty in the Church of God. I have been greatly guilty of Pride, endeavouring to run every Man down in Dispute: I have made this World my God, and been guilty of that. Idolatry in Ephesians 5. — I have not been a little guilty of Hypocrisy; I have endeavour'd by all ways and means to shake the Cross of Christ from off my Shoulders; and I
fear

fear I have been guilty of Blasphemy.-----
I have wrong'd many a poor Soul by writing as I have done; I have wish'd myself in their Condition, and would have given many thousands of Pounds, (had I had it) to have been in as good a Condition as some of them I writ against: I have discour's'd you and Mr. B. and Mr. J. and have thought to run down your Opinion by a Spirit of Insolency and Pride; but the Judgments of God have follow'd me; he has rent and torn me from these things,----and now shall I die; I am struck with Death.

Mr. Collings. Suppose you should die to Night (as we know not how it may be with any of us) can you contentedly sink into the deep Abyss of Misery, without striving for Salvation? Would you not run to Christ? Strive to take hold of him, and his purchas'd Blessedness.

Mr. Child (with a very grim Countenance) said, I shall go to Hell, I am broken in Judgment; when I think to pray either I have a flushing in my Face, as if I were in a Flame, or I am dumb, and cannot speak, or else I fall asleep upon my Knees; all the Signs of one whom God hath left forsaken and hardned.

Mr.

Mr. Collings. If God should impute to you the Righteousness of Christ, would it be of any Advantage to you?

Mr. Child. *If God would be so gracious as to impute Christ's Righteousness to me, it would make me a happy Man!*

Mr. Collings. Did you do what you did, in Writing, that Book against the Light of your Conscience, or Motions of the Spirit.

Mr. Child. *I think I did not formally sin against the Light of my Conscience, and Spirit of God; yet what I did, was mov'd with Malice, with this Cheat in my Heart, It may be it may do them good. The Night before the Book was publish'd, I had some Reluctancy, and Gripes of Conscience.*

Mr. Collings. Why did not you call them in before they were publish'd?

Mr. Child. *I fell ill upon it, and found myself more and more entangled and ensnar'd; one Door was open'd, and another Door open'd to my Ruin, as if I were a Man design'd for Damnation!*

After some Reasonings about Baptism, Conformity, and the then Troubles which Nonconformists were under; he said,

I have abundance of carnal fleshy Reasonings ; I am under the Power of Unbelief and Distrust : For these are my Arguings in me ; should I stick to the Church of England, then those I have written against, would account me the greatest Hypocrite in the World, to make so much ado about Despair, for what I have done against them : should I leave the Church of England, and stick to the Dissenters, and, with full Purpose of Heart cleave to the Lord ; then, if ever I am taken in a Meeting, they will have no Mercy on me, and triumph ; This is the Man that made his Recantation ! And then ruin me to all Intent and Purposes ; and I cannot bear the Thoughts of a Cross, nor a Prison.

Mr. Collings. Two Things are essentially necessary to the Peace of your Soul ; with all speed to publish your Recantation ; and set yourself to know the Truth of God, and to cleave to it.

Mr. Child. *What an astonishing Consideration it is for a Man to die in this Condition I am in ; to be under Horror for writing such Things, and yet have no Power to renounce it ; for should I do so, I should be quickly ruin'd in my Estate ;*

I had a Fancy, the other Morning, that the Sheriffs Officers were coming to seize all that I had ; and about a Week since, I had that Word, Can thy Heart endure, or thy Hands be strong, in the Day I will contend with thee ? I think I am able to satisfy any Atheist in the World, that there is a God ; for I find the Arrows of the Almighty sticking in me, and he runneth upon me as a Lion. I thought that I could go and fall at the Feet of those I have wronged, and beg their Forgiveness, and weis'd often, Oh that I could repent ! Oh, that God would wash me in the Fountain of his Son's Blood ! Oh that I had Faith that I could believe !

Mr. Collings, (taking Leave of Mr. Child) Can you not desire my Prayers ?

Mr. Child. *This is a hard Question. And after a little Pause, taking Mr. Collings by the Hand, said, For the sake of the Lord Jesus Christ, Pray for me at Night, if there be any Mercy yet left, that I may yet live in the Way of Mercy.*

Mr. Collings. (Finding the Troubles of Mr. Child still continuing and increasing) What do you think would give you Relief ?

Mr.

Mr. Child. *If I were in Heaven it could not relieve me ; for there I should behold the Face of a holy God, holy Saints, and Saints and Angels, as now I behold the Face of good Men upon Earth, with Shame and Confusion of Face.*

Mr. Collings. If God would take you in his Favour, that would relieve you.

Mr. Child. *His Wrath is come upon me to the uttermost.*

Mr. Collings. To despair reflects upon the Sov'reignty of God's Grace.

Mr. Child. *For those whose Day of Grace is not gone, God will multiply to Pardon ; but it is too late for me, my Day is gone.*

Mr. Collings. Did not you write a Book before the *Second Argument* ?

Mr. Child. *I did.*

Mr. Collings. Did not a Gentleman write some Animadversions upon it, by way of Answer, in a Manuscript ?

Mr. Child. *He did.*

Mr. Collings. Was it a sufficient Answer ?

Mr. Child. *It was rationally answer'd.*

Mr. Collings. Yet you printed this Book afterwards.

Mr. Child. *I did.*

After some time of calm Reasoning, Mr. Child began again to be in a great Horror, and spake to the Effect following.

Oh (said he) I am one of the greatest Hypocrites that ever liv'd upon the Earth, and shall be so accounted; God hath done his Will, and will do his Will upon me.--- The Wicked shall fall into Mischiefe, and the Backslider in Heart shall be fill'd with his own Ways. He that saith, he shall have Peace, and walketh in the Imagination of his evil Heart, the Lord will not spare him; but then the Anger of the Lord, and his Jealousy, shall smoke against that Man. Oh he thunders upon me! Should God let out the Sense of my Sins on me, (as he will) I should howl like a Dog, roar like a Lion, bellow like an Ox, mine inward Part would melt within me, as the Brass melts in the flaming Furnace; I shall lie lower than Judas, lower than Judas, I have sinned worse than Judas.

Mr. Collings. You make Application of Curses in the Book of God, but not of the Promises; consider *Isaiah 55. Psal. 34. 5.*

Mr.

Mr. Child. *Promises are Bread for Children; they look on him, and were lightned; I look unto him and am darkned; he knows that I have committed such Wickedness as never hath been done.*

Mr. Collings. Do you not sometimes find an Inclination to pray?

Mr. Child. *Seldom or never; --- only about an Hour before you came, I went about it; but the End was dismal, that Day you were here with Mr. W. I attempted it three times but could do nothing.*

Mr. Collings. Shall I pray for you?

Mr. Child. *No, no; 'tis too late: Neither Men nor Angels can relieve me.*

Mr. Collings. *Job saith, Tho' he slay me, yet I will trust in him.*

Mr. Child. *About two Months since I thought I had Comfort and Relief from hence; but now I cannot trust in him. God saith he will deal in a singular manner with me here on Earth, and in Hell also.*

Afterwards quoted against himself those Expressions, Heb. 10. 26. *For if we sin wilfully after that we have received the Knowledge of the Truth, there remains no more Sacrifice for Sin.* 2 Pet. 2. 20, 21, 22. *For if after they have escap'd from the Filthiness of*

the World, through the acknowledging of their Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, are y^t tangled again therein, and overcome, their latter End is worse than the beginning. For it had been better for them not to have acknowledg'd the Way of Righteousness, than after they have acknowledg'd it, to turn from the holy Righteousness, than after they have acknowledg'd it, to turn from the holy Commandments given unto them. But it is come unto them according to the Proverb; the Dog is returned to his own Vomit, and the Sow that was washed, to the wallowing in the Mire. And Mr. Child said, When I am feint and low, I now take somewhat to refresh me, but in Hell there is no Refreshment, not a Drop of Water to cool my Tongue. I wonder that my Head, (tho' it do not ach) doth not burst asunder, it is fille^d with dismal Cogitations.

Mr. Collings, with one Mr. R. gave Mr. Child another Visit, and Mr. R. put him upon saying the Lord's Prayer.

Mr. Child. I have thought of that, but I dare not say it for these Reasons; — 1st, I cannot call God Father. 2^{dly}, I cannot say, Thy Will be done. 3^{dly}, I

I cannot say, Forgive me my Trespaffes, as I forgive them that trespass against me. ——— All that I have, *added he*, is curs'd to me; I cannot give God Thanks for what I eat or drink.

Mr. Collings. Have you a Desire to be saved?

Mr. Child. Yes, *upon my own Terms, and not according to God's.*

It was then ask'd *Mr. Child*, What those Terms were? ——— But he would make no Answer.

About *October* the Twelfth, He was again visited by some of his Friends, whom the Rumour drew thither.

Says one of them, *Mr. Child*, the last time I saw you, you said that you had a *Peraventure* to depend upon, and that was all; I hope you have that still.

No, all is gone! *added he*, with doleful Voice.

Is God gone, and Christ gone? *said his Friends.*

All is gone! I am undone? *replied he.*

We hope the Lord will return again, *said they.*

You cannot hope so concerning me, added he.

Why, where Christ begins a good Work, he will perfect it, cry'd they.

Yes, he reply'd, if I had any; but all is gone, if ever I had any.

Then said they, you would do well, Mr. *Child* to use the Means of Grace, and frequent the Society of God's People, and desire their Prayers, tho' you say you have no Mind to pray nor desire their Prayers, yet if you go among them, you know not what God may do for you. Consider 2 *Kings* 7. 4.

I have been so great a Sinner, said he, against God, and the People of God, that God will have no Mercy for me.

If, said his Friends, God bring you out of this Condition, it may be more to his Honour and Glory, and to your strengthening and establishing of his People, than all you have done in Times past.

He said no more to them but this, God will glorify himself by me, and make me an Example for the strengthening and establishing of his People; but it shall end in my Destruction.

Then

Then they with great Sorrow withdrew, finding Society did but trouble and discompose him the more: Nor could his State be render'd worse almost than at that Time: His Wife with Grief owning, That often in the Night the very Ends of his Hair stood in Drops through the Anguish of his Spirit, continually crying out against the Book, &c. About which Time he was visited by Mr. *E. P.* between whom was this following Conference.

When he came into the Room he lamentably cry'd out, O that I might be a good Man! But there is no Hopes for me; it is now too late; I am the greatest Hypocrite in Nature.

Mr. *E. P.* I pray you, Mr. *Child*, instance in Particulars.

Mr. *Child.* I have been a dreadful Hypocrite in offering Repentance, when I had none.

Mr. *E. P.* I am a Stranger to any Repentance you offer'd.

Mr. *Child.* I have pretended such a Thing, tho' you know it not.

Mr. *E. P.* Do you intend any Repentance you have offer'd for the Printing and Publishing that Book?

Mr. Child. Yes.

Mr. E. P. It seems you confess you ought to repent of the Publishing that Book.

Mr. Child. Yes: It requires that Repentance that I shall never be able to give.

Then a Stander-by reply'd, Do you think, Mr. Child, that God is able to pardon you?

Mr. Child. No.

Mr. P. What is your Reason?

Mr. Child. God hath sworn in his Wrath, that I shall not enter into his Rest.

Mr. P. How do you know that he hath so sworn concerning you?

Mr. Child. (Setting him self down said) I confess, a Man should not affirm that which he hath no Reason for.---- But rose up as one discontented, and gave no further Answer.

Mr. P. I pray you let me be more inwardly acquainted with the State of your Soul?

Mr. Child. The Wrath of God is kindled, and burns within me.---It is impossible for you to imagine my Torment; and this is but an earnest Penny of

of my eternal Damnation. — I have Guilt enough upon me to sink Seventeen Kingdoms, and I know the Earth would open its Mouth, and swallow me up alive, like *Corah*, *Dathan*, and *Abiram*, were it not that God hath reserv'd me to be a more publick Spectacle of his Anger and Displeasure, both to Angels and Men. God hath taken away my Talent, and the Influence of the Divine Spirit hath altogether left me; I can neither pray, nor desire others to pray for me; my Heart is perfectly harden'd.

Mr. P. Could you wish that those that have an Interest in God, should improve it for you?

Mr. Child. How should I, when I cannot desire Jesus Christ to pray for me? I am now out of Hopes, for the Prayers of the Godly are recorded against me. (Floods of Tears flowing from his Eyes.) Dear-bought Experience hath taught me, that it is not a small thing to trifle with the great Concerns of Religion and Eternity; as most Men account it. I have made a God of this World, and neglected God and Jesus Christ; and therefore these things
ar

are justly come upon me.

—— I have been a loose and carnal Professor; and if I were in the Place of God, I should mete the same Measure that God doth to me. My Calamity is even at the Door, and all Men in a little time will justify God's dealing with me.

Mr. P. I pray explain yourself in these things.

Mr. Child. (Evading farther Discourse) you shall have the full Account of it in Print.

His Wife said, Who shall print it?

Mr. P. reply'd, I suppose he intends some signal Impression by Divine Vengeance.

Mr. Child. *Though what you have said is true, yet it is not what I intended; for I have resolved to give the World an Account of my Condition in a printed Paper.*

Mr. P's Friend, That is an humbling Dispensation, that you are exercis'd under.

Mr. Child. *An humbling Dispensation do you call it! I tell you it is a hardning Dispensation, and I feel it to be so.*

Mr.

Mr. E. P. I hope there is Mercy yet reserved for you.

Mr. Child. *I know I shall have Mercy, such as the Damned have. I do highly justify God in his Dealings with me.*

Another then present, cry'd out, O your justifying the Dealings of God with you, is a good Sign.

Mr. Child. *God can open the Mouths of Reprobates to justify his Proceedings.*

Mr. P. I hope that God will appear in a way of Mercy to your Soul, if you sincerely and heartily apply yourself to him.

Mr. Child. *The most judicious Men know, that I am a damned and lost Man.*

Mr. P. (Walking with him in the Fields) You seem now to be more settled in your Mind.

Mr. Child. *Though no Consideration can yield me Peace or Comfort, yet the Violence of my Torments admits of some Intermissions; and therefore I am not so sensibly afflicted at all Times, if I had but such a Sense of my Sin, as I ought to have, I should burst asunder, or (like Judas) use Extremity towards myself.*

Mr.

Mr. P. What mean you by that Passage (blaspheming his Tabernacle) in your Letter to Mr. J.

Mr. Child. *By it I intended reproaching and scandalizing the Church.*

Mr. P. (Taking the Letter out of his Pocket) Do you own the Contents of this Letter?



Mr. Child. *Yes, and it was written by me, as with the Pen of a ready Writer: ----I would fain believe, but all Power is taken away from me.*

Mr. P. I have discours'd with Mr. M. about your Case, and it is his Opinion, that a Recantation is your first Step, in Order to Peace in your Mind, and spoke it with much Concern for your Soul.

Mr. Child. (Shedding many Tears, and expressing a passionate Inquiry) *Is this*

this true, that he is concern'd for me?

By which Expression, with the manner of it, Mr. P. collected, that it gave some Ease to the Mind of Mr. Child, to have his Condition entertain'd in such a Minister's Thoughts.

This was the Sum of all Child's Discourse at that Time, which left him still beclouded, and distracted in his Understanding, but not without some Intermissions: But as the Servants of God are always ready to relieve the Distressed, so Mr. Child wanted not the Company of good and gracious Souls to condole his Case, and advise with. Soon after Mr. P's taking his Leave, several Friends came, and one of 'em ask'd him, How is it with you, Sir?

I am in great Confusion and Disorder in my Spirit (said he) I have sinned against so much Grace, that I am without Hopes of receiving Mercy.

Oh, said they, if your Trouble is in respect of the Book which you have written, whereby you have done so much Injury to the Suffering People of God, the best Way we
can

can advise you to, is to free your Conscience from Guilt, will be to make your Repentance and Recantation as Publick as your Sin is, Jo. 7. 19.

He reply'd, I must confess I stand greatly indebted to the Publick, but I am so confused in my Mind; that when I think of doing it, I can do nothing. ——— There are three things which are a great Burden to me; my Sin against God, which is impardonable, my Sin against God's People; and another thing.

What is that other thing? cried they, To which he made no Answer. Do you think that impardonable Sin you mentioned, is the Sin against the Holy Ghost?

I cannot tell, said he.

Was what you did done maliciously against God, Christ, and the Holy Spirit, and God's People, said his Friends?

He reply'd, No.

Then (added they) it may comfortably be concluded, you have not Sinned that Sin, and therefore you may take Encouragement from the comfortable

fortable Words of Christ, viz. that all other Sins and Blasphemies may be forgiven you: Consider the Instances of *David, Manasseh, Peter, Paul*, and the *Jews*, who were guilty of crucifying our Saviour, and imprecated the Guilt of his Blood upon their Children, to whom yet our Saviour in his Rich Mercy commands his Disciples first to preach the Gospel. Is your Condition worse than theirs? It may be your Endeavours heretofore, too much to advance Free-will, and the Power of the Creature, may be one reason why the Lord permitted you, thus to fall.

You have hit it, Sirs, cry'd he, I once thought there was a Power in Man, but now I find it otherwise, for I cannot pray; the Lord hath taken away the Gift of Prayer from me ----- I have no Desire after any thing that is good, I cannot repent.

O (said they) Christ is exalted to be a Prince and a Saviour to give Repentance and Remission of Sins.----- Shall we now pray for you?

He answer'd, Yes.

Then

Then one of the Company prayed ; and upon parting, Mr. *Child* thanked them for their Visit, and said to this Effect ; --- All this will make against me.

Then some more Company came, and said to him, (as Physicians visiting their Patients, so Friends one that is wounded in Spirit, enquire what is the Cause of his Grief.) We pray you declare your Mind herein --- To this for about half an Hour they could obtain no answer, (adding) That *Paul* endeavoured to recover such again as had fallen from an Article of Faith, without which they could not be saved, and counselled others in Meekness to instruct those that oppose themselves, if God peradventure would give them Repentance to the Acknowledgment of the Truth. What do you think of *Spira's* Condition ?

Spira's Condition, said he, was nothing to mine ; for Wrath is come, and coming on me to the utmost, because I have forsaken that which I have believed to be true ; to embrace that which I knew to be false. thro' slavish fear to keep myself from Sufferings.

ferings.-----I sought to be great in the World, but God crost me therein in all my Designs : and since the Hand of God hath been upon me, my Spirit hath often times risen against God, that gave me Nourishment by Food and Sleep. (And looking to the Cieling, said,) I see as it were a little Light, thro' a Cranney, or Crevise, as if I would desire to pray. (Then Tears came down his Cheeks abundantly, and he said) If it would please God to manifest himself to me, I should be such a Monument of Mercy as never was in the World, to be a Warning to all others.

Then they added, it's the Apostle's Counsel, that we confess our Faults one to another, and pray one for another, that we may be healed.

He reply'd with Tears in his Eyes, I cannot get this base Heart to open it self farther.

Then they press'd him, saying, Shall we pray for you ?

No, no, no, cry'd he.

It's desired, said they, you would set down in Writing the Heads of your chief Trouble.

To

To which he answer'd, I did write something to that Effect; but when I had done, I destroyed it; and here he left off, and said no more.

A while after he was again visited by Mr. R. and some others, to whom he said, I had a turn in my Spirit the last Week, as a Result of that warm Discourse I had with you and Mr. Collings, concerning the Eminency and Sovereignty of the Grace of God, but it is now gone again.

Mr. R. Implore again the Throne of Grace.

Mr. Child. I regard Iniquity in my Heart, and God will not hear my Prayer. (And said to another) If God should send an Angel from Heaven to inform me, I should not believe it.

Crying out, O I cannot pray.

Mr. W. How can you so long as you have a Lie in your Right Hand? Retract what you have done publickly, or else you cannot expect to have an Heart to pray.

Mr. Child, (To Mrs. M.) How deplorable a thing is this, that I who have preached so much of the Glory of another World, should now be deprived

prived of it all ! ——— You will as surely see me damned, as you now see me stand here.

Mrs. *M.* Have you no Intermission ?
—— Do such Thoughts always attend you ?

Mr. *Child.* I have Intermission sometimes.

Mrs. *M.* Do you think that God cannot save you ?

Mr. *Child.* Yes he can ; or else I might desire to be in Hell immediately.

Mrs. *M.* Do you think God will not save you ?

Mr. *Child.* I cannot believe that he will.

Mrs. *M.* What is the Cause of all this Trouble ?

Mr. *Child.* That cursed Book.

Being at one Mr. *C's*, in Discourse concerning *Francis Spira*, Mr. *Child* said, I am an hundred times a greater Sinner than *Spira*, a thousand times ten thousand times, yea an hundred thousand times a greater Sinner than he.

Mr. *C.* Do you love me ?

Mr. *Child.* I love you. (And taking Mr. *C.* by the Hand, said) I conjure thee by the eternal God, that thou take

take care of my Wife and Children. I would give ten thousand Worlds for a God, and often---Oh what an ungodly Family have I! Husband cannot pray, Wife cannot pray, Children cannot pray, Servants cannot pray! While others are serving their God, we do nothing.

Other Friends giving him a Visit, ask'd if they should pray with him?

Mr. Child. *No, it is too late.-----The Company of good Men are a Burden to me.*

They prest him to publish Repen-
tance for his Book that had caus'd him
so much Trouble.

Mr. Child. *I sometime thought so
to do; but I am so confus'd and con-
founded in my Mind, that I know not
what to do; I can do nothing to pur-
pose.*

Mr. L. (Offering him some good
Counsel, and he returning no Answer,
said) Do you think what I speak is
insignificant? Is there no Weight in
what we say?

Mr. Child. *There is not only enough
in what you say to raise a Man from
Earth to Heaven, but from Hell to Hea-
ven, unless such a one as I, who have an
Heart*

Heart of a Devil.---I have no Heart to read or pray; all Good is departed from me.

Mr. Child being ask'd how it was with him, answer'd very ill.

Mr. M. Mean you in Body or Mind?

Whereat he walk'd up and down the Room very Disconsolate, looking much downward.

Mr. M. said, Why do you look so much downward? Look up, for Salvation is not from beneath, but from above.

Mr. Child reply'd, *I would look upwards, but I cannot.---To another he said, that hellish Book would ruin him in Body, and Soul.*

Another said, the Learned Dr. Twiss in his *Vindiciæ Grotiæ*; confesses there were Depths in the Controversie between Calvinists and Arminians, which he could not fathom, yet he believed the Truth against the Arminians.

Mr. Child. *Oh I thought I could have dived to the Bottom of it, by Parts, but I see I cannot!---And then, and at many other times, said,---I am broken in Judgment; I have no Consistency*

stency in myself ; I am lost ; there is no Hope, no Hope.

Another Friend, present with him, had mention'd and turn'd to *Prov. 1. 25, 26. Ye have set at nought all my Counsel, and would none of my Reproof ; I also will laugh at your Calamity, I will mock when your Fear cometh.*

Mr. Child took the Bible, put his Finger on the Place, shew'd it to us, and said, *That's my Portion.*

Mr. P. Speaking to Mr. Child concerning Redemption and Forgiveness, through Faith in the precious Blood of Christ, and exhorting him to trust to it, Mr. Child answer'd,

O I cannot reach it ! I cannot come at it !— Again (with a deep Sigh) said, *The black Tokens of Reprobation are upon me.*

Mr.—You are obliged to stoop to the Sovereignty of God.

Mr. Child. *Oh, I cannot, I would be above him ! Oh that there should be an eternal blessed Being, and I sure never to enjoy him ! That there should be an eternal Wrath and Punishment, and I sure to fall under it !*—*I shall be an eternal Monument of the Wrath of God !*

Thus .

Thus he spun his Thread of Life,
with great Reluctancy, Fear, Horror,
Torment and Anguish; and what is
worse of all, in Despair of the mercy
of God; so that he became an Object,
not only of Pity, but for Atheists to
stand and admire, and tremble at:
And so he liv'd, contemning the Ad-
vice of Divines and Physicians, 'till the
15th of October, 1614, when he most
miserably became his own Murderer,
by Hanging himself in his Dwelling-
House, in Spittle-Fields, London.



THE
Irreligious LIFE, and Miserable
DEATH of

Mr. George Edwards,

Late of Stratford by Bow, in the Coun-
try of Essex, who murder'd himself,
Jan. the 4th, 1703-4.



THE following Relation be-
ing in itself so full a Testi-
mony of God's Judgment
upon Atheism and Infide-
lity, we hope the Reader
will beware of a Looseness in Religion,
and the Offices of a Christian, that this
Land, where the Gospel flows like Milk
and Honey, may never produce the like
terrible Instance, as this *Edwards* among
us, of whom I am going to give the
following Account.

As

As for his birth it was at *Plaistow*, in the Year 1661, where he was Educated by his Parents with something of Strictness, until he arriv'd to Years of Maturity, when he marry'd a young Gentlewoman of a good Fortune, and a vertuous and godly Disposition. His Father dying, left him a competent Estate, with which for several Years, he carried on his Trade with great Diligence, and appear'd to be one of good Natural Parts, in all his Conversation.

— As to his Religion, he profess'd none; and that which he seemingly adher'd to, was of the Church of *England*, to which he very seldom resorted.

He had, no doubt, kept Company with some modern Atheists, which at first stagger'd him, and threw himself upon a Belief, that *All things came by Nature*, and that what Christians call the Providence of God, was purely Accident and Chance. — These Notions thus imbib'd, led him to a voluptuous and sensual Life; and consequently devoted him to an Atheistical Conversation.

His Mind thus confus'd, must needs meet with a hurry of distracted *Thoughts*, which, indeed was too visibly seen in him; by his pious Wife, after he had daily slept off the Fumes of excessive Drinking.

In this Course of Life he liv'd a considerable Time, to the great Grief of his godly Wife, who then lay under a great Uneasiness for the Welfare of his immortal Soul.

In the Year 1698, his Pious Consort grew so Restless at the Thoughts of his deplorable Condition, that she resolv'd to Consult some Divine about him. In order thereto, she thought none more Proper to unboosome her Thoughts to, than that eminent Divine, the Reverend Mr. *John Smith*, Vicar of *Westham* a Man of extensive Charity, and great Learning.

And since this painful Divine has given the World a large Account of this Tragedy, in a Book lately Printed by Mr. *Brown*, without *Temple-Bar*, we shall not pretend to give any other Relation of this miserable Man, than what is owing to the said Book, for which the World must be indebted to Mr. *Brown*, who

who, through a Desire of Good, generously gave leave to our Publishing it in this manner.

To proceed then, we will begin with the first Discovery of Mr. *Edwards's* Case, in the Reverend Mr. *Smith's* own Words.

ABout the Year 1628, his Wife came to me, lamenting his Case, and desiring that I would take some convenient Time to Discourse with him about his Opinions. — I told her, I would. And, a few Months after, discours'd him in my Garden to this effect :

Mr. *Edwards*, I hear you have embrac'd some very odd Opinions. It is said, You do not Believe there is any God, or that we have immortal Souls. Is it so, or not ? I shall discover nothing to your Prejudice, but endeavour to satisfy yon if I can.

He answer'd, he had such Thoughts ; For he believ'd, all things came by Nature, and that when we Dy'd, there was an End of us ; and that Things were in the World, as they always had been, and so they would continue for ever.

I ask'd him, what he meant by Nature? And said to him, Look upon these Plants; they must have a Maker, they could not come of themselves; and do not you see great Wisdom and Contrivance in the various Colours, and curious Composure of the Parts of every one of them? It is impossible that they should be the Effects of Chance, or of a blind Principle; and therefore, if by Nature, you mean an universal Power, or Being, that acts with Wisdom and Goodness; 'tis but another Name for God.

As to your saying, that Things are in the World as they always have been; do not you see, that there is in the World a continual Succession of Causes, and Effects? Is it not plain, that nothing can make it self? Is it not visible every Day, that one thing proceeds from another? That your Son is Begotten by you, as you were by your Father? And, that none of your Progenitors was any more able to make himself, than you were to make your self? From whence it clearly follows, That there must have been one First in every Kind. There must have been a
First

First Man form'd by the Supreme Being; and consequently Things are not in the World as they always were, but had Beginning from GOD, the Independent Cause and Creator of all; and if so, they must have an End, since the same GOD, has declared they shall, and therefore will not continue for ever, as they are.

Then I said, As to your self, Do you think there is nothing about you but Flesh, Blood, and Bones?

He answer'd, No, not he.

I ask'd, what is that which Thinks and Contrives; Considers and Examines; which Argues and Disputes, &c. Is this nothing but Matter?

He said, he could not tell, he thought not.

Upon which I lent him a Volume of Dr. Scot, about the Being of God, and the short Method with the *Deists*, desir'd him to peruse them carefully, and so we parted. But in a few Weeks he return'd with them again, and said, I have read them all over, they are as well Written as such Books can be; the Authors of them are Learned Men, but cannot convince me; I cannot Believe.

I said, among other things, What do you think of Scripture ? Do not you believe the Truth of that ?

Hah, (reply'd he) Grant that, and Grant all. If Scripture be proved to be of Divine Authority, then all your Religion follows, and all Doctrines are easily Accountable.

Then said I, What have you to say against the Antiquity and Divine Authority of the Holy Scriptures, which have been deliver'd to us with such an unanimous and constant Tradition of its Divine Original, that it was Written in those Times, and by those inspired Persons it pretends to ?

He said, There were many Impostors in the World ;—— that the Books of Scripture might be Written in Dark Times, and so get Authority by Degrees. Besides (*continu'd he*) the Protestants and Papists, Lutherans and Calvinists, accuse one another of Corrupting the Scripture, and of many Faults in their Translations ; and he could not tell what was True.

I told him, That these were meer Conjectures and Cavils ; That tho' several Parties accus'd one another on-
ly

ly of Faults in their Translations ; the Original *Hebrew* and *Greek* could not be prov'd to have been Corrupted ; that our *English* Translations were as Exact as any extant ; and that the Bible, tho' some of it was near 4000 Years standing, had all the Characters of Truth and Sincerity, and was handed to us with all the Proofs and Evidence of its Truth, that a writing was capable of, &c.

And here I began to examine what led him to these *Atheistical* Opinions. Upon which he reply'd hastily, Why, there is scarce any I see that believes it ;—For, if People did really believe these things, would they live as they do ? If such and such zealous *Dissenters* did indeed believe that there was a GOD, and Judgment to come, would they be so false and Knaveish so Hypocritical and Malicious, Implacable and Uncharitable, Factious and worldly ? If such and such constant *Churchmen* did in Truth believe their *Creed*, would they be so Intemperate and Profane ; so Sensual, Debauch'd, and Covetous ? For my part, if I believed there was a God ; that the Scrip-
ture

ture is his Word ; that our Souls are Immortal ; and that there is an Heaven and an Hell, I should live quite otherwise. This, I confess, was a smart and surprizing Answer, and bears very hard upon wicked Men of all Parties, whose unchristian Lives contradict the holy Faith they profess.—But having answer'd him to this, and brought him to confess, that there were some Professors of the Christian Religion, whose Life and Conversation were Agreeable to their Profession, and that those who did not Live up to it, would be Angry if he should say, they Believ'd no God, &c.

Among other Questions, said I, Pray what Books do you read ? I am afraid some bad Authors have put these Notions into your Head.

He said, No, I have very good Books ; amongst the rest, Judge *Hale's* Origination of Mankind, and Bishop *Wilkins's* Natural Religion.

These, said I, are very good Books ; read them attentively and impartially, and I do not doubt but they'll give you Satisfaction.

I have read them (*said he*) and there is abundance of Learning in them, but it does not convince me.

I told him, he must be content with such Evidence as the Nature of things will bear, &c. — After which, I said, Pray to God to enlighten your Mind, but — (recalling myself) how can you pray, that do not believe? He gave me a dejected Look, and then took his Leave.

The first Sunday in Sept. 1700, he came to the Communion with his Brewer's Frock, and dirty Neckcloth, unknown to me at first; he snatch'd the Bread out of my Assistant's Hands and stood up. I pointed to him to kneel, which he did, saying, *Must I kneel!* When I came with the Cup to these Words, [*Drink this*] he suddenly caught hold of the Cup, and cry'd, *So I will, if it be good*, and would have drank it all, had not I hinder'd. This Action struck me with Horror. When Communion was over, he carry'd away two Books from the Communion Rails, and threw them into an Hedge, but afterwards gave them to the Owner.

The

The next Day I went to him and Reprov'd him to such a Degree, that he mutter'd, blush'd, and appear'd disorder'd. In the Evening he came to me, and acknowledg'd his Fault, and seem'd sorry for it. But perceiving him still to stick to his former Opinions, I desir'd him to write down what Objections he had, that I might answer them ; to which he consented, and so parted.

On the 9th of Sept. 1700, Mr. Edwards brought me a Paper written with his own Hand, which treated, *Of the Being, or not Being of God ; the Eternity of the World, and, The Origination, and Eternity of Man.* At the latter End of which, was his own Belief, viz. *That the World is Eternal, and of Matter existing without any more Power than Matter and Motion ; and that all Men go to their Mother, the Earth, and there End.*

To which Paper, I writ him an Answer, Sept. 18, 1700, in which I treated him with all the Tenderness and Plainness I could. Upon this I was told that he had been heard to say, *AN ATHEIST ! I do not believe there is really any such Person, for there is no*
Man

Man of Sense, who considers Things, but must acknowledge a Deity.

But he was only brought to that fearful State, to fear and tremble; and, to drive away such Thoughts, addicted himself to lewd and vicious Courses, and kept Company with base Women, and had gotten the foul Disease.

Not long after this, he was question'd before the Honourable Sir G. N. upon the account of a naughty Woman, who was seen to go into his House one Sunday, when all his Family was at Church, but never seen to come out again, as if he had murder'd and hid her; but as this went no farther, we will leave it, and return to Tim, who continued to run on in Infidelity, Impenitence, and Drunkenness. In his Drink he was mad, and out of it, in a melancholy despairing Condition, notwithstanding all the Endeavours his Relations and others us'd for his Conversion.

Thus he hurry'd away his precious Time, till his Estate became mortgag'd, and his Affairs ran backwards; the Thoughts of which, with the Horrors of Conscience for disowning his Maker

ker, and living a prophane, debauch'd Life, threw him into extream Despair, with a convinc'd Understanding, but void of Faith.

Thus he continu'd till the beginning of *January* 1703-4, when having sat up all Day on *Saturday* at an Alehouse, he kept on *Sunday* at Home, in his melancholy Humours, as he us'd to be after Drinking. On the *Tuesday* following he bid his Wife go to Bow, about the Concerns of their Brewhouse there. In the mean time he shut himself up in a Chamber, kindled a Fire, and prepared things for his most unnatural and wicked Design upon his own Life. When his Wife came Home about Noon, she went up to the Chamber-Door, and knock'd; after a while he ask'd, *Who is there?* She answer'd, *'Tis I; Will you come down to Dinner?* He said, *No, Child; Go down, I cannot eat To-day.* She went down, and after a while sent up the Maid, and bid her look in, if she could, and see what he was doing. The Maid went up, and just as she came to the Door, this

He

He had kept the Door barr'd till now, but having prepar'd all things for it, he unbarr'd it just as he went to do his own Execution, which was in this manner :



He had a Musket, a Fowling-piece, a screw'd-barrel Gun ; the Mussels of these he had rais'd upon a wooden Horse, and planted two of them to his Head, and one to his left Side ; and having stript himself to his Shirt and Breeches, laid himself down close to them, and setting, with an hot Iron, fire to a Train of Powder, they went off at once, and murder'd him in a moment.

Here was the dreadful End of his Atheism and Infidelity, his Irreligion and Impiety. In this horrible manner did he cut off his Life and Hopes at one Blow, and, without any Fear of God, or Regard to the Good of his Soul, launch'd out into an unalterable Eternity.

A farther Account of God's severe Judgments on several other Apostates.

IN the whole Book of God there is not a more grievous or terrible Threading pronounc'd on any Sin than against Apostacy; is, that a wilful falling away from the Truths of the Gospel manifested unto us; or when Persons for Fear of Men, Temptations of Gain, or Preferment, Compliance with the Fashions of a vain wicked World, or any other Carnal Motive, make Shipwreck of a good Conscience, and forsake that true Faith which they once profess'd, and trample under Foot those blessed

blest and pure Institutions of Christ, which they have been partakers of, who can read without trembling, or consider without Horror, those repeated, positive, and astonishing Determinations of God himself, by the unerring Pen of his Apostle? It is impossible for those who were once enlightened, and have tasted of the heavenly Gift, and were made Partakers of the Holy Ghost, and have tasted the good Word of God, and the Power of the World to come, if they shall fall away, to renew them again unto Repentance, seeing they crucify to themselves the Son of God afresh, and put him to an open Shame. *Heb. 6. 4. and 20. 37. If we sin wilfully after that we have receiv'd the Knowledge of the Truth, there remaineth no more Sacrifice for Sin, but a fearful looking for of Judgment, and fiery Indignation, which shall devour the Adversaries.*

But besides the dreadful Sentence such Backsliders are to expect from the great Tribunal, divine Vengeance will inflict signal Judgments on them here on Earth. Therefore to the foregoing Histories, we shall add the following remarkable Examples.

1. The Emperor *Julian*, for his Revolt from Christianity, infamously Famous to all Generations, by the Name of *Apostate*, was bred up in the Christian Faith, and for his Learning admitted to be a Reader in the Church of *Nicodemia*, afterwards being seduced by certain Pagan Sophisters, turn'd Heathen, and by various subtil Arts endeavour'd to root out the Christian Religion, but never after he had declar'd himself such a Renegade, prosper'd in any of his Undertakings. At last, in an unfortunate Expedition against the *Persians*, being shot with an Arrow by an unknown Soldier, receiv'd his own Blood, gushing out of the Wound, into the Palm of his Hand, and in a despairing Malice against Christ, flung it up towards Heaven, saying, *Vicisti tandem Galilæ!* At last thou hast been too hard for me, O *Galilean!* So the wicked Wretch was us'd in Scorn to all the blessed *Jesus*; and thus died in all respects most miserable.

To descend to latter Times, *Henry of Navarre*, King of *Navarre*, (Father of *Charles* the IVth) educated in the Reformed Religion, being inveigled with the imaginary Hopes of the Crown of *France*,

dinia, and the Provinces of the *Spaniard*, lest the Protestants both in Profession, and Person, and became a Persecutor of those whose Protector he was: But whilst his ambitious Hopes upon *Spain*, he was deprived of his own Crown; and God in Justice (who never leaves any, that first leaves not him) gave him over to an immature and violent Death, for a Bullet took him off within his own Trenches, besieging the poor Protestants in *Roan*.

3. *Henry the IVth*, his Son, how many pitch'd Battles did he fight, and yet came off both with Safety and Victory? How many Dangers did he escape, even to Admiration, whilst he kept firm to the Protestant Religion, in which he was bred, and continued at Distance with the Pope? But when for politick and worldly Respects he tasted the same sower Grapes, which set his Father's Teeth on edge; and for fear of not getting firm Possession of *Paris*, would rather hazard Paradise; and against the Dictates of his Conscience, sacrifice and establish (as he thought) his Seat in the Throne of *France*, easily comply'd, and in Hypocrisy satisfied himself.

himself to be formally reconcil'd to the Church of *Rome*, did not long survive this High Treason against the King of kings : For first a young *Jesuit* with a Dagger struck him into the mouth (a fair Warning on those Lips which had renounc'd the Truths of his Redeemer) and still persisting without Repentance, soon after a *Povish Raviliac* stab'd him to the Heart, in his Coach, as he was passing over the new Bridge at *Paris*.

4. The late famous *French General Marshal Turenne* had liv'd Threescore Years and upwards in the Reform'd Communion, but at last, by I know not what Court Poyson, or *Jesuit's Charm*, (contrary to the Resolution of holy *Policarpus*, who being tempted to *Apostasy*, answered, *These eighty Years have I serv'd Christ, and never wanted any thing, and I will never now forsake so good and indulgent a Master*) was drawn away to embrace *Popery*; when, behold! soon after, he that had escap'd the Shock of many Battles, was suddenly slain, where he could not rationally suspect any great Danger by a Cannon-Bullet, as he was viewing at a great distance, the posture of the Enemies Camp, in the late

late War with *Germany*—I remember once I heard a Papist upbraid a Protestant, with this Gentleman's Change of Religion, saying, *You see Turenne when he grew old, was willing to die in the Arms of our Mother Church.* To which the Protestant very well reply'd, *Yes, Sir, 'twas, when he was old; and 'tis nothing strange to hear that some Men in their declining Years begin to dote, for faithful young Solomon prov'd an old Idolater.*

5. *Melancthon* (that *Phoenix* of *Germany*) has a Relation of Apostacy visibly punish'd in a certain *Taylor's* Servant, who being for a while a zealous Professor of the Protestant Religion, afterwards removing to another Place, was persuaded by some of his Companions to turn Papist again, and did with them go to *Mass*, and receive the Sacrament but in one kind; but at last returning again to his old Master, (who was ignorant of the Fellow's Relapse, but seeing him neglecting to participate of the Lord's Supper) he began to admonish him of his Duty therein; to all which he answer'd not a Word for a long time, but in the end, roaring out most horribly, he pronounc'd these Words,

O Master! I am unworthy of that holy Banquet, I have deny'd the Gospel, and am become the Devil's perpetual Vassal. With these Words in his Mouth, he suddenly flung himself out of the Window, and with the Fall burst out his Bowels.

6. One *Latamus* that belong'd to the cruel Court of *Inquisition*, had, in his Youth imbib'd some Principles of true Religion, but the Vanities of the World soon choak'd that good Seed, and being prefer'd to a gainful Place in the Pope's *Shambles*, (for so I may call the bloody *Inquisition*) thought he should not deserve it, unless he became a most grievous Persecutor of those whom his Conscience told him were the faithful Servants of God. As the Proverb assures us, *That one Renegado is worse than ten Turks*; so Experience shews, that when any that have formerly own'd Religion, revolt from it, they of all others become the fiercest and most barbarous Persecutors of it; fearing belike, that they shall still be suspected to be of the depressed Party, if they do not put off all Humanity towards them, and to avoid the Censure of *Hereticks*, think there is a Necessity to shew themselves prophane
Hell.

God's Judgments.

Hell-Hounds, savage, canine, incarnate Devils. This was this *Latamus's* Course, no Body so busie as he to find out, hunt after, suppress, destroy, and torment all that would not conform to the false Doctrines, and vile Superstition of the Church of *Rome*, by Law Established. But in the midst of his Career, God was with him, and suddenly struck him inwardly and outwardly with Tempests of Soul, and bodily Diseases, and then his Eyes were opened, but not to Repentance, but to Despair; Astonishment seiz'd him, and he was overwhelmed with Confusion and Horror, so that he sent for several learned Men, and being in the Extremity of Desperation, freely of his own accord confess'd his Impiety, in such Expressions as these: 'O how heavy, how grievous is my Sin; who willingly and willingly against my Knowledge, against the Dictates of my Conscience, have imploy'd my self in the Devil's Drudgery, and persecuted Christ in his Members, and opposed the Truth of the Gospel, and stopt the Worship of God, and as much as in me lay, endeavour'd

your'd with *Lucifer*, to pull God
 out of his Throne, and to make
 Void his Law, and prefer'd the Lusts
 and Pleasures, the Malice and Re-
 venge of vile and wicked Men, be-
 fore the Glory of God, the Char-
 ity which I ow'd to my Neighbours,
 the Reverence which I ought
 have paid to the Divine Com-
 mandment's? Alas! Thus have I sinned
 against the holy Ghost; nor can I
 hope for any Forgiveness in this Life,
 or to Eternity, but am Damn'd for
 ever with the Devil and his Angels,
 whose I am, and whom I have ser-
 ved, and am incorporated into his
 Kingdom. Henceforwards behold
 not *Latamus* as a Man, but as a very
 Devil; and if your Eyes were o-
 pen'd, you would believe my Hands
 and Feet already deform'd, and
 horrible, with filthy Claws, &c.
 The Learned Men that came to visit
 him were astonish'd at these Discour-
 ses, especially perceiving that the
 same did not proceed from an ordi-
 nary Melancholly, or Distemperature
 of Brain, (for in all things he was
 sufficiently Sensible and Rational) but
 from

from a Sense of the Wrath of God,
and Horror of Conscience. However
one of them, a Doctor of Divinity,
and his intimate Friend, began with
a long and christian Discourse to com-
fort him, endeavouring to demonstrate
to him from God's Word, That
was no Sin so grievous, but by
Grace and Mercy of God might be
pardon'd. To which *Latamus* readily
answer'd, That he was not ignorant that
there were many Places in Holy Writ,
most excellent, and exceeding full of
Comfort, but tho' they were full of
Comfort, they were nothing to him,
for he wanted Faith and Reliance upon
God, and knew already for a certainty
that the Sentence of Damnation was
gone forth against him : And (*said*
he) that you may not doubt there-
of, you shall see that on this Bed
whereon I lye, I shall, without ever
being able to rise from it, suddenly
Dye, but take me for an Example,
and let me be a Warning to all ;
for this Cause I sent for you
hither, that being by me Admoni-
shed, you may Repent, and give
over Persecuting of the faithful Ser-
vants

'vants of God. This and much more to the same Purpose having said, he fell into horrible Roarings and Howlings, and so in the Presence of them all expir'd; his Countenance and whole Body being turn'd to so great a Deformity and Ugliness, as was frightful to behold. This was Recorded in this very manner by the Learned *Fincelius*, l. *De Miraculis*, who attests it for a certain and notorious Truth.

*The Remarkable History of John Diazius,
and his barbarous Brother.*

7. *John Diazius* was born in *Spain*, brought up at School, afterwards he went to *Paris*, to study the Arts, where he continu'd 13 Years: But it pleas'd God, that whilst he read over the holy Scriptures, and some of *Luther's* Books, and other Protestant Divines, he began to see and abominate the Errors of Popery. And therefore to further himself in the Knowledge and Study of the Truth, he went to *Geneva*, and thence to *Stratsburgh*, where *Martin Bucer* observing his Learning, Piety and Diligence

gence, obtain'd of the Senate, that he should be join'd with him, to go to the Disputation at *Ratisbon*, and when he came thither, he went to *Peter Mulvinda*, a *Spaniard*, the Pope's Agent in *Germany*, who, when he knew that he came in the Company with *Bucer* and the other Protestant Divines, he was much astonish'd, and admir'd how he was so much changed from that which he knew him to be at *Paris*, and withal he fretted exceedingly that they had gotten a *Spaniard* amongst them, presuming that they would Triumph more in him than in many *Germans*; whereupon he left no means unessay'd, to draw him back again to the Church of *Rome*; sometimes making large Proffers and Promises unto him, other times threatening severe Punishments, and mixing both with earnest Entreaties: But when by no means he could prevail to divert him from the Truth, he sent for his Brother *Alphonfus Diazius*, one of the Pope's Lawyers, from *Rome*; who hearing that his Brother was turn'd Protestant, came speedily into

Germany, bringing a notorious *Banditti*, or Cut-Throat with him : When he came to *Ratisbon*, *Diazius* was departed to *Newburg*, about Printing of a Book of *Bucer's* ; which *Alphonfus* hearing of, soon follow'd him thither ; where, after long debating of matters of Religion between the two Brothers, *Alphonfus* seeing the Heart of his Brother *John* to be constantly planted on the sure Rock of God's Truth, that neither Preferments would allure him, nor Threats terrifie him, both having been us'd by the Pope's Agent : And that he himself by no Persuasion could prevail with him to return to *Papery*, he feign'd himself friendly to take his leave of him, and so departed. But shortly after he returned again with this Russian, whom *Alphonfus* sending disguis'd with a Letter to his Brother, as *John Diazius* was reading the Letter, this bloody Murderer cleft his Head with an Hatchet he had prepared for that purpose : This happen'd *Anno Christi*, 1546, and this Inhuman Cain was highly commended by the Papists for it. But the Lord would not suffer such

such an unnatural Villany to go unpunish'd, for not long after he was so dogged and hunted with the Furies of his own Conscience, that being at *Trent*, when the Council was held there, he hang'd himself about the Neck of his own Mule.

8. There was one *Burton* the Bayliff of *Crowland* in *Lincolnshire*, who, in *K. Edward* the Sixth's time, was seemingly a zealous Protestant; but as soon as ever cruel *Queen Mary* came to the Crown, he openly turn'd Papist, and endeavour'd to stir up his Neighbours to introduce the Mass; who being very forward in it, the Lord's Day following, this *Burton* went to the Curate, saying,———*Sirrah, will you not say Mass? Buckle your self to it, you Knave, or by God's blood I will sheath my Dagger in thy shoulders!* The poor Curate being affrighted herewith, betook himself to read the Mass; but shortly after, as this *Burton*, with one of his Neighbours, rode together upon the *Fen-bank*, a Crow (as it appear'd to be, and with her usual Note) flew over his Head, and voiding her Excrements, it fell on his Nose, and so ran

down upon his Beard, and flank so horribly, as set him a vomiting in a most violent manner; whereupon hast'ning home, he betook himself to Bed, but could Eat nothing; and the Stench and Vomiting still continuing, with fearful Oaths and Execrations he lay Cursing the Crow for thus Poysoning of him, and so remain'd in extrem and continual Torments for two or three Days, and then raving, and without any Signs of Repentance, or fear of God, Dyed.

9 One *Pavier*, the Town Clerk of *London*, in the Days of King *Henry* the 8th, a Cruel Enemy to the True Professors of the Gospel, Swore an Oath, That if the King would set forth the Scriptures in *English*, rather than he would live to see it he would Cut his own Throat; but he broke his Word, for he did not Cut his Throat, but soon after (thinking belike a Dog's Death more fit for him than a Calf's) Hang'd himself.

10. One *Rockwood* (of which Family there are many Papists to this Day in *Suffolk*, and one of them was executed for the *Gun-Powder Treason-Plot*) was a
great

great stirrer up of the Persecution against God's People in *Calais* (before Queen *Mary*, to the everlasting Infamy, and Disservice of the *English* Nation, suffered that important Town to be lost to the *French*) but being suddenly struck with Sicknes, he lay staring and raving, and perpetually crying out; *All too Late, for I have maliciously sought the Death of many godly Persons, and against the Light of my own Conscience, and therefore, All too late! all too late!* And thus he continued unto his End.

11. *Thomas Blair*, a Privy-Counsellor to the King of the *Scots*, was a great Prosecutor of the reformed Christians in that Kingdom, but being by God smitten with Sicknes, he fell into Despair, crying out, *That he was damn'd and cast-away; that he was damn'd without Remedy, &c.* And when the Monks came to his Bed-side, and pretended to comfort him, he said, Be gone with your Trumperies and Fooleries: I never till now, believed there was either God or Devil, Heaven, or Hell; I had no more esteem of your Religion, than I had of the *Protestants*: In what I did,

I acted only as a *Politician* ; to get Preferment and Money ; and to that purpose I engaged on the Bishop's behalf, as thinking them the strongest Side, and that would best gratify my hopes, and so I prevail'd with the King to cast out their Adversaries. All your *Masses* and your *Fastings* can do me no good, for I am damn'd, and the Devil hath me already in his Gripes to carry me to Hell, there to torment me to Eternity, according to my Deserts.—In which miserable Condition he dyed, without any sign of true Repentance.

12. One *Larkin*, who seemed to have had some Taste of the Gospel in his younger Years, seeing the Storms of Persecution begin to arise, not only forsook the truth, but for Gain turn'd an Informer against, and Persecutor of such as constantly profess'd it ; and particularly he discover'd and apprehended one *Eagles*, who for Religion thereupon suffered Death. But soon after, he himself, for a small Crime, was Arraign'd, Condemn'd, and Hang'd. And as he stood at the Bar to receive Sentence of Death, he said publicly, *This is justly fallen upon me for betraying the Blood of*
that

that just Man, George Eagles, who thro' my means was Condemned, and I sold his Life for a little Money.

13. That exemplary Judgment of God poured out upon *Stephen Gardiner*, Bishop of *Winchester* in Q. *Mary's* Days, all Generations will have cause to remember, and admire. This cruel Bishop, upon the Day wherein reverend *Latimer*, and learned *Ridley* were to be burnt at *Oxford*, was so eager upon their Deaths, that although some great Noblemen came to Dine with him that Day, yet he would not sit down to Dinner, till one of his Servants, whom he had sent thither on purpose, coming Post from *Oxford*, about Four of the Clock in the Afternoon, brought the News that Execution was done upon them.——Then the Wretch hasten'd to Dinner, and was very merry, but before he had eaten many Bits, a sudden stroke of God's Hand fell sore upon him, insomuch that he was carried immediately to his Bed, in which he continued for Fifteen Days, in intolerable Anguish and Torments, even rotting above Ground, during all which Time, he could void nothing that he

received, either by Stool or Urine ; his Tongue also hung out of his Mouth, Swoln and Black, and so he Languish'd, and Pined away in great Anguish and Misery.

For a Conclusion, as I would not break any bruised Reed, nor be altogether a Boanerges, Thundering and Lightning out of Judgments, but be also a *Barnabas*, a *Son of Consolation*, and pour Balm of Gilead into those Wounded Spirits, who out of human Frailty, and Satan's Suggestions, and the World's Temptations, may too far Comply against the Dictates of their own Consciences, and for the same, may happen to be smitten with the Terrors of the Lord. I shall here add one Eminent Example of a great Light of the Church that fell in that kind, and was brought to the very Brink of Despair, and yet by God's Grace Repented, and was happily restored. But let not the Reader think a slight or superficial Repentance would serve the Turn ; you shall soon perceive by the Vehemence of his Expressions, proceeding from a Heart all over in Confusions and Agonies ; what Soul-Convulsions he had endor'd, before he could

could receive any Glimpse of Comfort

The Case is that of *Origen*, a Person for Learning, Zeal, and other Gifts, as Famous as any in the Primitive Church, after the Apostle's Days. In the Reign of *Decius*, for the Doctrine of Christ, he underwent Bands, and Torments in his Body, Wracking, and Bars of Iron, Dungeons ; besides several Threats of Death and Burning, &c. At length hearing that some Christians were carried to an Idol Temple, to force them to Sacrifice, he out of his Zeal, ran thither to incourage and dissuade them from it : When his Adversaries saw him, they let go the other, and laid hold upon him, putting him to his Choice, whether he would offer Incense to the Idol, or have his Body defiled with a Foul and Ugly Blackmoor. He chooses to offer Incense. Then did they presently put Incense into his trembling Hands, and whilst he demur'd upon it, they took his Hands, and caused him to throw it into the Fire, and thereupon presently cryed out, *Origen hath Sacrificed, Origen hath Sacrificed.* After this Fact he was Excommunicated by the Church, and being filled with Shame and

and Sorrow, he left *Alexandria*, and came to *Jerusalem*, where he was even constrained by Importunity to Preach to them. He took his Bible, open'd it, and the first place he cast his Eye upon, was this Scripture. *Unto the Wicked, God saith, why dost thou preach my Law, and take my Covenant into thy Mouth? Psalm 50. 16.* — When he had read these Words, he sat down and burst out into abundance of Tears, the whole Congregation Weeping with him also, so that he was not able to say any more unto them. After this he wandred up and down in great Grief and Torment of Conscience, and wrote the following Lamentation.

IN the bitterness of Grief of Mind, I go about to speak unto them, who shall hereafter read this confused Writing. But how can I speak, when my Tongue is tyed up, and my Lips dare not once more wag? My Tongue doth not his Office; my Throat is dried up, and all my Senses and Instruments are polluted with Iniquity. — O ye Saints and blessed of God, with watery Eyes, and wet Cheeks soaked in Dolour and Pain, I beseech you to fall
down

down before the Seat of Almighty God,
for me miserable Sinner, who by reason of
my Sins, dare not crave ought at the Hands
of God. --- Woe is me, because of the
Sorrow of my Heart. --- Woe is me, my
Mother, that ever thou broughtest me
forth. --- A righteous Man to be conver-
sant in unrighteousness? An Heir of the
Kingdom of God to be an Inheritor of the
Kingdom of Satan? A Minister to be
found wallowing in Impiety? A Man
beautified with Honour and Dignity, to
be in the end blemished with Shame and
Ignominy. --- A lofty Terret, yet sudden-
ly thrown to the Ground! A burning
Light, yet forthwith darkned! A fruitful
Tree, yet quickly wither'd! A running
Fountain, yet by and by dried up. Wo
is me, that ever I was decked with Gifts
and Graces, and now seen pitifully depri-
ved of all. --- But who will minister Moi-
sture to my Head? And who will give
Streams of Tears unto my Eyes, that I
may bewail my self in this my sorrowful
plight? Alas! O my Ministry, how shall
I lament thee? Oh all ye my Friends,
tender my Case, and pity my Person, that
am so dangerously Wounded! Pity me,
O ye my Friends, for that I have now
trodden

trodden under Foot the Seal and Cogni-
 fance of my Profession ; and joyned in
 League with the Devil. Pity me, O ye
 my Friends, for that I am rejected and
 cast away from before the Face of God
 Almighty. There is no Sorrow compara-
 ble to my Sorrow ; there is no Affliction
 that exceeds my Affliction ; no Bitterness
 that passeth my Bitterness ; no Lamen-
 tation more Lamentable than mine ; nei-
 ther is there any Sin greater than mine ;
 and there is no Salve for me. Where is
 that good Shepherd of Souls ? Where is
 he that went down from *Jerusalem* to
Jericho, which salved and cured him that
 was wounded by Thieves ? Seek me out,
 O Lord, that am fallen from the higher
Jerusalem ; which has broken the Vow
 which I made in Baptism, &c. Alas ! that
 ever I was Doctor, and now occupy not
 the room of a Disciple. Thou knowest, O
 Lord, that I fell against my Will ; where-
 as I went about to enlighten others, I
 darkened my self. When I endeavoured
 to bring others from Death to Life, I
 brought my self from Life to Death :
 When I minded to present others before
 God, I presented my self before the Devil :
 When I desired to be found a Friend and
 Favourer

Favourer of Godliness, I was found a Foe, and a furtherer of Iniquity: When I set my self against the Assemblies of the Wicked, and reprov'd their doings, there found I shame, and the most pestilent Wound of the Devil. Some promised me to be Baptised; but after that I passed from them, the Devil that same Night transform'd himself into an Angel of Light, and said unto me, When thou art up in the Morning, go on and persuade them, and bring them unto God. But the Devil going before me, prepared the Way, &c. and I, O unhappy Creature, skipping out of my Bed at the dawning Day, could not finish my wonted Devotion, neither accomplish my usual Prayers; desiring that all Men might be saved, and come to the knowledge of the Truth, whilst in the mean time I wrapped my self in the Snares of the Devil. I gat me to those wicked Men, and required them to perform the Covenant made the Night before. I, silly Soul, knowing not their subtilty, till we came to the Baptism. O blinded Heart, how didst thou not remember? O foolish Mind, how didst thou not bethink thy self? O witless Brain, how didst thou not understand? But it was the Devil that lulled thee asleep, and in the

the end, flew thy unhappy and wretched Soul. ——— O thou Devil, what hast thou done unto me? How hast thou Wounded me? I bewailed sometimes the Fall of *Sampson*, but now have Fallen worse my self: *Sampson* had his Hair cut off, but the Crown of Glory is fallen off my Head. *Sampson* lost the carnal Eyes of his Body, but my spiritual Eyes are put out. It was the Wiliness of a Woman that brought Confusion upon him; but it was my Tongue that brought me into this sinful Condition.

Alas! my Church liveth, yet I am a Widdower. My Sons are alive, yet I am barren. Every Creature rejoyceth, and I alone am desolate and sorrowful, &c. Bewail me O ye blessed People of God, who am banished from God. Bewail me, who am shut out of the Wedding Chamber of Christ. Bewail me who am abhorred of the Angels, and severed from the Saints. ——— Who knoweth whether the Lord will have mercy on me, and whether he will pity my Fall? Whether he will be moved with my Desolation? Whether he will have respect to my Humiliation, and encline all his tender Compassions towards me? I will prostrate myself before the Threshold and Porch of his Church, that I may entreat:

entreat all People, both small and great, saying unto them, trample and tread me under Foot, who am the unfavoury Salt; tread upon me, who have no Taste nor Savour of God; tread upon me who am fit for nothing.

Now let the Elders mourn, for that the Staff whereon they leaned is fallen.

Now let the young Men mourn, for that their School-master is fallen.

Now let the Virgins mourn, for that the advancer of Virginity is defiled.

Now let the Ministers mourn, for that their Patron and Defender is shamefully fallen.

Woe is me, that I fell so lewdly! Woe is me, that I fell most dangerously, and cannot rise again! Assist me, O holy Spirit, and give me Grace to Repent; let the Fountain of Tears be opened, and Gush out into Streams, to see if peradventure I may have Grace thoroughly to Repent, and to wipe out of the Book of my Conscience, the Accusations printed therein against me. But thou, O Lord, think not upon my polluted Lips, neither weigh thou the Tongue that hath uttered lewd things, but accept of my Repentance, and have mercy upon me, and raise me up
out

out of the Mire of Corruption, for the Puddle thereof hath even choaked me up. Woe is me, that was sometimes a pearl glistering in the golden Garland of Glory, but now am thrown into the Dust, and trodden in the Mire of Contempt. Woe is me, that the Salt of God now lieth on the Dunghill. —

Now I will address my self, and turn my Talk unto God. Why hast thou lifted me up, and cast me down? I had not committed this Impiety, unless thou hadst withdrawn thine Hand from me. --- But why, O Lord, hast thou shut my Mouth by the holy Prophet *David*? How; have I been the First that sinned, or am I the First that fell? Why hast thou forsaken me, being desolate, and banished me from amongst thy Saints, and astonished me, when I should preach thy Law? *David* himself, who hath shut up my mouth, sinned too bad in thy sight, yet upon Repentance, thou receivedst him to mercy. *Peter*, that was a Pillar, after his Fall, wipes it away with salt Tears, not continuing long in the Puddle of Infidelity.

Now I humbly beseech thee, O Lord, call me back, for that I have trodden a most perilous and destructive Way; grant me

me that good Guide and Instructor the Holy Ghost, that I become not the Habitation of Devils ; but that I may tread under Foot the Devils that trod upon me, and overcoming all his Sights, may be again restored to the Joys of thy Salvation.

Now all ye which behold my Wound, tremble for Fear, and take heed that ye slumber not; nor fall into the like Crime ; but rather let us assemble together, and rend our Hearts, &c. I mourn and am sorry at the Heart Root, O ye my Friends, that ever so I tell, &c.

Let the Angels lament over me, because of this my dangerous Fall.

Let the Assemblies of Saints lament over me, for that I am severed from their blessed Societies.

Let the holy Church lament over me, for that I am woefully declined.

Let all the People lament over me, for that I have my Death's Wound.

Bewail me, that am in like case with the reprobate Jews ; for this which was said unto them, why dost thou Preach my Law, &c. now soundeth alike in my Ears ; What shall I do, that am thus beset with manifest Mischiefs. Alas, O Death, why dost thou linger ? Herein thou dost spire, and bear me Malice ? O Satan, what Mischief

chief hast thou brought unto me? How hast thou pierced my Breast with thy poisonous Dart? Thinkest thou, that my Ruin will avail any thing at all? Thinkest thou to procure to thy self any Ease or Rest, whilst that I am grievously tormented? Who is able to signifie unto thee, whether my Sins be wiped and done away? Whether I shall not again be coupled with, and made a Companion to the Saints? O Lord, I fall before thy Mercy-seat, have Mercy upon me, who mourn thus out of measure, because I have greatly offended. -- Rid my Soul, Lord, from the roaring Lyon. The Assembly of the Saints doth make intercession for me, who am an unprofitable Servant. Shew mercy, O Lord, to thy wandring Sheep, who is subject to the rending Teeth of the ravenous Wolf. Save me, O Lord out of his Mouth. Let my Sack-cloth be rent asunder, and gird me with Joy and Gladness. Let me be again received into the Joy of my God. Let me be thought worthy of his Kingdom, through the earnest Petitions of the Church, which sorroweth over me, and humbleth herself to Jesus Christ, in my behalf? To whom with the Father and the Holy Ghost, be all Glory and Honour, for ever and ever. *Amen.*

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